

Music & Letters

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Volume XXIX

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VICTORIAN MEMORIES¹

BY EDGAR SHELTON

My father sent me to school at New College, Eastbourne, where Frederick Schreiner, brother of the authoress of 'The Story of a South African Farm', ruled with a rod of iron. When told the German name of the violin master who visited the school I heard in imagination a rattling of the sabre; but an elderly man, dressed according to the order of the day in frock coat, white cravat and spats and crowned withal with a wig of golden hue, came forward, fiddle in hand, to greet me, bowing.

Joachim remarked, when he first visited England, that he knew of but one master in the country capable of teaching the violin; and things had not altered much since then. The absurdity, for instance, of leading, when an occasional touch of the tiller would have sufficed to give direction, never entered the mind of my blond Teuton, who played *forte* and in unison throughout a lesson, beating time persistently with his foot. This mode of teaching served its purpose up to a point, for Herr P. amassed a small fortune, with which he retired to Germany. My schooling was cut short in this wise: Undeterred by what might befall me at the hands of the heavy-fisted Dutchman, I lay awake one night waiting for the footsteps of the patrolling master to cease. When all was quiet I slipped out on tiptoe from the school with my fiddle and made across the Downs for home, where I knew that some of our musical friends were meeting that night. When in the morning the master entered the dormitory and found that my bed had not been slept in he reported it to Schreiner, who gave instructions for me to come to his study when I returned. Unexpectedly Schreiner withheld his brawny

¹ Extracted from an unpublished autobiography.

hand and remarked: "Music is the only thing you are fitted for. You had better not waste your time and mine by staying on."

. . . One whose nationality was a puzzle—a man with a head that seemed too large for his body, possessed of a swarthy complexion, dark and lustrous eyes and a high, domed forehead about which long black locks, curled at the ends, descended to his shoulders, speaking in an under-tone with a slight foreign accent, an Englishman who might have passed for an Asiatic and yet resisted the temptation to make himself out to be a foreigner—such was Julian Adams when, in 1877, he entered upon his duties as conductor at the newly built Floral Hall, Devonshire Park. He had committed to memory the scores of the great masters, and never required a copy of them. From the moment that the name of his old master Moscheles was mentioned his discourse became animated. At the Salle Erard in Paris he had heard Chopin, Kalkbrenner, Dreyschock, Doepler and Prudent play, and had given a recital there himself. For my entertainment Adams went to the piano and improvised in the classical way, as was then regarded an essential part of a pianist's accomplishment; and then, concealing the keyboard from his eyes by hanging up a cloth, he played Weber's 'Concertstück'—a feat I could not have believed possible without witnessing it.

One afternoon in the summer of 1886 I was bidden to a party at his house to hear a protégé of his. When the company was assembled the door opened and a little chap with strongly marked features and a crop of black curly hair, and clad in a velveteen suit, lace collar and shoes with buckles, entered and, with the confidence of one thrice his age, went straight to the piano to play a series of solos which won rapturous applause. A lady who turned out to be the lad's mother afterwards addressed me: "I understand from Mr. Adams that you are studying at the Royal College of Music. I have decided to send my son there. He is very young, and will feel strange. Will you promise to look after him until he becomes accustomed to the place?" This I agreed to do, only to discover later that the boy could not only look after himself but me into the bargain. He was to become known as Sir Landon Ronald.

My parents had in no way opposed my wish to take to music as a profession. Bidden in January 1885 to attend an audition held at Alexandra House, the earlier home of the Royal College of Music, I played my showpiece, read something at sight and was admitted as a student. The examiners were Henry Holmes and Richard Gompertz. The former—a man of ascetic features, surmounted by a bushy head of hair protruding from behind like a board, and with

a fastidious choice of words and manner of utterance—contrasted strongly with the perky younger man, distinguished by a crop of nigger-like hair, fierce mustachios and an obliquity of vision startling to behold. This I had to get accustomed to, for I became his pupil—and to get accustomed to a temper that was at times trying. The encouraging word, that he was “trying”, once inscribed by a headmaster in a boy’s first report, was modified at the end of the next term into “very trying”. This might have been applied both to Gompertz and myself.

Trained in the widely divergent schools of Joachim and Léonard, Gompertz partook of both masters’ styles, following the latter in particular in his elevation of the elbow when approaching the nut and bowing on any one string; and also in his mastery of shakes and trills in all their forms, especially those involving the little finger, the *pons asinorum* of every violinist. For all-round playing, including a finished staccato, neatness of execution and accuracy of intonation, Gompertz was unequalled by any other master then in London. He respected the laws and institutions of his adopted country and indeed desired to be thought British, to the point that he agreed to umpire at a cricket match which the R.C.M. XI played against the Royal Academy of Music; wore a cricket cap on the Eastbourne sea-front when church parade was in progress; donned a silk hat for a walk over the Downs to Beachy Head; and once forwarded a Stradivarius violin through the post. A legacy enabled him to retire to Dresden, where a friend of mine once met him walking out in a suit of plus-fours of a decided check, à l’anglaise.

In the next year my name appeared among those of students chosen to augment the orchestra for the ceremony of Queen Victoria’s laying the foundation-stone of the Imperial Institute. I recall Sir Arthur Sullivan with his slender white hands, mutton-chop whiskers, hair parted in the middle and the monocle which he, leaving off beating, would frequently wipe—unperturbed by the stifling heat, while he conducted the Ode and Imperial March he had written for the occasion.

Startling to the newcomer at the R.C.M. was the babel of voices and instruments competing for mastery in various parts of the building. The whereabouts of burly Ernst Pauer could always be determined by the sound of his rasping, gutteral voice. An antiquated organ on which some student was practising Rheinberger, Guilmant or—worse—Stainer’s heel-and-toe pedal exercises could usually be heard while luncheon was served in the low, dark basement room. In the chair, in the centre of a long table, sat

MUSIC AND LETTERS

Sir George Grove, surrounded by his courtiers, the observed of all observers, a Great Panjandrum whose boots none dare displace. It was Sir George who, on his way to the Hovingham Bach festival, got out of the train at York, a sandwich in one hand and a letter in the other, with the intention of posting the latter—to discover when back in his carriage that he had posted the sandwich.

It was a change to escape from the stuffiness of Alexandra House to the new and up-to-date College in the Prince Consort Road with its fine concert-hall, light and airy class-rooms and a dining-room where a decent lunch was served at a shilling a head. The dream of Sir George's life had come true. A new era was entered, and the College produced astonishing results. After Grove's retirement it was not easy to tell who was the new Director, for Stanford, autocratic by nature, often appeared to usurp Parry's place, or so it seemed to me when I returned a few years later to attend orchestra. Stanford was at the top of his form; he had composed much of his best music, and more was to follow. He could write with facility in any form as could one other and one only of his contemporaries—Saint-Saëns. '*Shamus O'Brien*' was his best opera. The music, exciting at times, tuneful throughout and alternating between grave and gay, revealed Stanford in the light of a lyrical and dramatic composer and gives cause for wonder why he did not compose more Irish operas. '*Shamus O'Brien*' should have run for a twelve-month, and the only reason I can think of for the moderation of its success was its misfortune in being housed at the Opéra Comique—a dirty, dismal hole.

There was nothing Stanford could not do, once he had set his mind to it. This he attributed—apart from natural gifts—to constant practice. Not a day passed without his putting pen to paper. He told Arthur Bent that it was as necessary for a composer as for an executant to keep his hand in. The self-opinionated Stanford misunderstood both Elgar and Richard Strauss. He and Parry were frequently at variance; Mackenzie and Stanford always so; while Sullivan was regarded with a jealous eye. We who played in the College orchestra in the 1880s remember Stanford as he was in his thirties—tall and slender, with black hair parted well to the right, a lock falling over his forehead; the quizzical look in the eyes peering through pince-nez; a face that rarely relaxed into a smile; and the caustic remarks that scared most of us at rehearsal. My last sight of him was that of a bowed but mentally alert old man, waiting at the corner of Baker Street for an omnibus, into which I assisted him, bidding him good-bye for the last time.

During a visit to London, Sgambati paid a visit to the College

and conducted the students' orchestra. His style suggested the manner in which plainsong may have been pointed by the head cantor in medieval times, a vertical downward movement of the stick sufficing to indicate the beats and their subdivisions. His example was followed by the opera conductor Campanini, who during his tenure of office at Covent Garden from 1904 to 1912, when I played under his direction, once only forsook the habit of giving none but down-beats, namely, when he conducted '*Pelléas et Mélisande*'—and did so then only because he was compelled. The harpist, in particular, suffered from this method, and told me that, with beats that were all alike, he could never be sure of his entries (having so many bars' rest) until he had learned every opera by heart.

. . . On leaving the College I obtained an appointment as music master at a smart preparatory school in Hampshire. While the other masters were provided with house accommodation close to the school I had to live a mile away and pay rent, the cost of which, deducted from my salary of £100 a year, left me with £70. The day's work began at 7 a.m. and ended at 8 p.m. When it was suggested that I should take "duty" as well I packed up my troubles and came back to London. The burly Carl Armbruster conducted the orchestra at the Haymarket Theatre. Having heard me play Vieuxtemps's '*Rêverie*' he said: "One of my first violins will be leaving next week. You can take his place. Your salary will be 32s. 6d. a week." Under Beerbohm Tree's management I, a lad of eighteen, took over my duties and remained there for five-and-a-half years, doing the spade-work which no young orchestral player could then hope to avoid. Armbruster had acted as chorus-master at the Bayreuth festivals, and he embarked on a series of recitals on the subject: "*The Ring at Bayreuth*". When so engaged he would absent himself from the Haymarket, and if, as sometimes happened, the leader Heinrich Krause was also absent, the task of conducting devolved upon me.

When I, a greenhorn, took hold of the stick to conduct for the first time the programme opened with Vincent Wallace's '*Lurline*' overture (the best, by the way, he ever composed). About to begin, I looked over the top of the tall upright piano placed on my left and discovered the seat to be empty. The buzzer could not be ignored, and away we went, minus the help of a pianist. A page of the overture or little more had been played when the iron door leading into the orchestra opened and a youth of about twenty, with spare figure, pallid countenance and long curly black locks, entered hurriedly, dropped into the vacant seat and joined forces—which I

thought smart on the part of this unknown deputy, who was unlikely to have heard a note of Wallace's overture before. He showed himself equally alert in the rest of the programme. Afterwards I thanked him and we left the theatre together. I decided to accompany him on foot to his destination, which he told me was 185 Oxford Street, next door or next door but one to the Pantheon. On the way he told me he had lately left the Royal Academy of Music, where he had held the Mendelssohn Scholarship for the past three years, and that his name was Henry J. Wood. The next time we met it was his turn to do "the carving". It was at the first performance, at St. George's Hall, of an operetta of his own composing, 'One Hundred Years Ago', given by Garcia's Vocal and Dramatic School, which he had joined as co-partner.

To return to the house No. 185 Oxford Street: there on a certain Sunday afternoon, on the top floor, we—a string quartet with Henry J. Wood at the piano—played through from badly copied and ill-corrected manuscript parts the opera 'Mignon', due to be revived under his direction at the Royalty Theatre. This opera, abounding in delicate and florid writing for woodwind, solos for the first horn and brilliant passage-work for the strings, cannot be played cross-legged by any orchestra, no matter what its reputation may be. It was not easy then to secure a scratch orchestra capable of the task—one willing, too, to accept the cut-prices offered by the management and apologized for on the ground of its being an enterprise attended by almost certain loss. This argument applied to almost every kind of musical performance then given in this country, outside the orbits of bright, particular stars. The elect played at the Philharmonic, Richter and Henschel concerts. To search elsewhere for players like them was like looking for needles in haystacks. Nor could a conductor ever be sure he would command the services of the musician he had bargained for. Though a player who had accepted would write at the last moment to say that he was sending Mr. So-and-so to take his place, this did not really enlighten the conductor, who might discover that it was not Mr. So-and-so but his deputy's deputy who had come to play. Like the needy and seedy wight who could hardly be blamed for trying to do the right thing when he wiped his boot on the mat and left the sole, the deputy three-times-removed could not be blamed for taking risks and chancing consequences. He, poor devil, got the kicks, but became resigned to them as eels, it is said, do to being skinned.

Those were times of national prosperity, and the reward for the musician was on this scale: 45s. a week for the rank and file at the early Promenade concerts; 6s. 4d. a performance for those who

played at the principal London theatres, owned or leased by Irving, Tree, Alexander, Wyndham and Hare; 5s. a performance when Bancroft leased the Haymarket Theatre.

Irving's relations with the Lyceum orchestra were anything but cordial, important though the part was that music played in his productions. Trouble arose after the opening performance of 'Faust', when the orchestra was summoned to rehearse with the stage the next morning. Protests were made, and Irving came before the curtain to inquire what was the matter. The principal cellist, an Irishman named Geary, was quick to reply. "The orchestra", he said, "has attended eighty rehearsals of 'Faust' without receiving any remuneration, and is disinclined to do any more." Irving replied: "If that expresses the general feeling of the orchestra, then you can all go. I will install a Mustel organ in the theatre and engage an organist to do the work." A nonsensical piece of bluff! At rehearsal a whole morning or afternoon would be spent with nothing for the orchestra to do. Irving was oblivious of this and of how the hands of the clock turned. Once when a long stage wait had occurred Irving happened to look over into the orchestra and saw several vacant chairs. "What is the meaning of this, Ball? The players should be in their places!" "They have gone out to get a bite, Mr. Irving, and will be back in a few minutes", replied Meredith Ball, the conductor. "They have no business to leave the theatre until the rehearsal is over", said Irving. "I have not gone out to get lunch!" (No, I said to myself; it is not necessary for you to do so—it will be brought in to you.)

The post of theatre conductor was not enviable, especially when his duties included the writing of the incidental music. It was, as a rule, cut in a shameful manner, and there was some excuse for Hamilton Clarke's throwing his baton at the head of Hastings, the stage manager of the Haymarket Theatre, when the latter entered the orchestra to make further alterations. Hamilton Clarke was fully aware of his own merits as a composer and resented criticism from non-musicians. Sullivan apart, he had no equal, at the time of which I speak, as a writer of incidental music. There must be something in compositions some of which one retains in memory after half a century and more, as I can of the jig at the end of 'Much Ado about Nothing' and the melody accompanying the choosing of the caskets and the procession of gondolas in 'The Merchant of Venice', which Hamilton Clarke wrote for productions at the Lyceum; and fragments of a fine set of waltzes played in the ball-room of the Winter Palace in 'The Red Lamp', a nihilist play which Tree produced at the Comedy.

Though Hamilton Clarke remained with Irving for several years there was no friendship between them. Having rehearsed the music he had written for 'King Lear', Hamilton Clarke asked Irving to hear it played. The orchestra assembled at the hour fixed, but was kept waiting. When at last Irving arrived he began talking to the stage manager, the business manager and others who had followed upon his heels. Unwilling to wait longer, Hamilton Clarke played through the overture, but still they talked. "I will now hear the overture", said Irving. "That was the overture we have just played", replied Hamilton Clarke. "Oh!", exclaimed Irving with affected surprise. "Then I will hear the first entr'acte." And he turned his back on the conductor. The Cordelia motive heard in this number was played on a solo viola. "What is that instrument?", asked Irving, when the music had ceased. "That is a viola", was the answer. "Well, it sounded to me like the bellowing of an old cow"; and without stopping to hear any more, Irving strode from the stage. "The next time I write incidental music it will be for something more edifying than this—a circus!", snarled Hamilton Clarke, and he slammed the full score with a bang.

Irving's last adventure, after he left the Lyceum, was to take Drury Lane for the production of 'Dante'. Xavier Leroux wrote the music, scoring it for a large orchestra. Though the players were augmented the overture was so elaborately scored as to be impracticable and the 'Egmont' overture was performed instead. After a fortnight the conductor, Sidney Ffoulkes, withdrew the 'Egmont' and replaced it with a new overture. This did not escape Irving's notice, and he asked for the 'Egmont' to be restored. Yet shortly afterwards he expressed a wish to hear the new overture again, and so well pleased was he now that it was played at every performance of 'Dante' until, towards the end of the run, cuts were made in the orchestra and it was no longer practicable. No one save the conductor and the orchestra knew that it was the composition of the young leader of the orchestra, Frank Bridge.

. . . Revisiting Eastbourne after some years, I sought out my former piano master. After supper he said: "I have an instrument here for disposal, which once belonged to my brother. He saw it advertised for £2 10s., and bought it." He dragged from under the sofa a wooden sarcophagus and took therefrom a four-stringed Leviathan—17 inches long in the body, 14 inches across at the widest part of the lower bouts, pierced with broad, antique-looking F-holes, and fitted with the deepest ribs I had ever seen in an instrument of the sort. It required all the length and strength of

one's fingers to grapple with the monster. The tone resembled that of an organ. The former owner had played it cello-wise, gripped between the knees. I determined to try conclusions with it, bought it and bore it away. "Podgers" was the nickname afterwards conferred upon my Leviathan by Peter Wood, the old viola-player. On returning to the College orchestra as a viola-player after the summer holidays I found Brahms's second Symphony on the desks. We had not proceeded far when the conductor paused to remark that one of the violas seemed to have become rusty during the holidays.

A knock at the door; it was Peter Wood, who called to say he was engaged at the State concert; would I deputize for him in 'Lohengrin' at Covent Garden? If there is a sight more depressing than the tables on the morning after a civic banquet it is an opera house at 10 a.m. The principal viola, Lewis, beckoned me to take the next seat to him. "What have you got there?", he asked, contemplating my instrument. "I don't know", I replied. He asked me: "Have you ever played the opera 'Lohengrin'??" "Never", was my answer. A mere handful of players had arrived, and I asked where were the rest, to be told that the rehearsal had been called for deputies only. At that moment a man in his fifties, of medium height and aristocratic in appearance and bearing, entered the orchestra and mounted the rostrum which then, unlike now, was placed close to the stage; and the lights went up. It was the conductor Mancinelli.

"Never yawn in the presence of a conductor when it is his own work you are playing", is a sound principle for the orchestral player who wishes to get on in the world. It was as well that Mancinelli was not conducting an opera of his own. Not that 'Lohengrin' induces yawning in the orchestra. It keeps the players not only awake but on tenterhooks. For all we knew, Mancinelli too might be on tenterhooks; but if so, he was too courteous to show it. Unlike Mahler, who when conducting 'The Ring' in London singled out a viola-player named Simmonds to play a passage alone from 'Siegfried', only to be told to come and play it himself; unlike Gounod who, when criticized by the harpist—an elderly, fussy wight with a high-pitched voice—for an awkward change of pedal in 'Romeo and Juliet', descended from the rostrum, seated himself at the instrument and showed the player how it should be done; unlike these, I say, Mancinelli steered a straight course, looking neither to the right nor to the left and leaving the players to negotiate, as best they could in the absence of so many important instruments, the snags that abound in the string

parts of each act of 'Lohengrin'. In a word, he let us down lightly and in return we, Falstaff's ragged army, gave him all we had to give. Which was more than the old dame did, who was once heard to remark: "Such a nice band, my dear! It never comes round with the collecting box!"

On the night of the second State concert, Lewis and I again played together at the Opera, the work being 'The Huguenots', conducted by Flon, blond and bearded. The orchestral parts were doubtless the same as those used for the original production at Covent Garden in 1848—printed in small French type on paper discoloured with age and worn away in places, leaving breaks in the stave where lines and notes had once been. Deficiencies were supposed to have been made good by the aid of some player's lead-pencil. Numerous were the pasted-over cuts ('The Huguenots', given in its entirety, would last as long as 'The Mastersingers'). This was my last experience of the opera orchestra until, ten years later, I joined it as a regular member.

In 1898, with eight other musicians, I received at short notice a royal command to go to Balmoral, where we stayed for five weeks. The team consisted of: conductor, Bent; violins, Hopkinson and Sutcliffe; viola, Shelton; cello, Hann; double-bass, C. Hobday; trumpet, F. James; clarinet, C. Draper; and pianist, Edgar Bainton. The Queen's predilection was for Mendelssohn, Johann Strauss, Gounod, Sterndale Bennett and Sullivan. She also liked Meyerbeer and early Wagner. Nor were Bizet, Delibes, Massenet and Tchaikovsky left out. And the choice did not end there; a hundred pieces, at least, by more or less obscure composers were selected. The Queen possessed no inconsiderable knowledge of the works of the old masters. As well as Mendelssohn's overtures and movements from his symphonies and quartets, she liked the suites and ballets of seventeenth-century French composers. Princess Henry of Battenberg would sometimes join us at the piano in a quartet or quintet of her own choosing. Campbell senior, the royal piper, invited us round to his rooms, and played to us for an hour. His son, who was his equal as a piper, grew to like the violin, and Bent offered for fun to see what he could make of it. But the piper's ear had become so accustomed to the scale of his own instrument that, try as he would, he could not help flattening the seventh. The existence of a leading-note was beyond his comprehension, and the lessons had to be given up. The view from the castle windows, with its firwoods and hills beyond, and the figure of Campbell striding up and down the splendid terrace while the Queen breakfasted, make a picture that lives in my memory. In January 1900 those of the

Private Band who had reached the retiring age were pensioned, and seven of us who had played at Balmoral were appointed under Royal Warrant to replace them. The members of the band were to receive £50 or £80 a year (£80 for those who were to play not only at Windsor but also at Balmoral and Osborne) with promise of a pension on retirement at the age of sixty. Lodging and travelling expenses were also allowed and, in addition, a bottle of sherry or port whenever we stayed at Windsor or Buckingham Palace. We who had played at Balmoral were asked to do so again in the autumn of 1899. Hardly a week had elapsed when the South African war broke out, and then there soon came news of reverses to our troops. The aged Queen seemed heart-stricken, and tears would sometimes be seen coursing down her cheeks while we played. A growing pallor pervaded her countenance, which became changed almost beyond recognition. The sound of music, she said, distressed her, and at the end of a month we were told that our services would no longer be required. A little over a year later I stood upon the leads of Buckingham Palace watching the funeral cortège go by of a great queen.

In November 1902 we were instructed to play at Sandringham. One morning the King sent word that he would like us to perform during dinner, an idea we did not relish, this never having been regarded as part of our duty. If it were to become an established rule festivals and concert engagements might have to be cancelled at the last moment, and work at academies and schools put aside. We decided that an effort should be made to get the order revoked; and the Master of the King's Music, Sir Walter Parratt, having heard our case, offered to support us and represent the matter to the King. We left Sandringham at the end of a week's engagement, each carrying away a brace of pheasants. In the following summer we received notice that the Private Band would be dissolved. It seemed a pity that so ancient an institution—which had an unbroken story back to the time of Edward IV, at least—should in the year of grace 1903 be so abruptly abolished. A petition for the reprieve of the Private Band was therefore presented; the King hearkened unto the sound of our voice, and in January of the next year Royal Warrants were issued—but with altered conditions. We were no longer to receive salary or pension; instead, a fee of three guineas was allowed each time we played—that is to say, at the four or five Courts at which our services would be required. In the second year of George V's reign a military band was employed to play in the Throne Room at Buckingham Palace on the nights when Courts were in progress; the Private Band then ceased to exist and

its name became forgotten. There was some astonishment, therefore, when the radio announced that the King's Band would play at the coronation of King George VI, for nothing had been heard of it for twenty-five years. Eighteen of the twenty-five players had, meanwhile, departed from this life. Of those remaining four only, including myself, took part. The photograph taken in the Abbey, looking towards the choir screen, shows four white-headed old die-hards, seated at the front desks and playing for the third and last time at a coronation.

. . . I have said something about Stanford. Parry's name and his will always be remembered together. Stanford's art was the more varied, Parry led the more varied life. He studied natural science, philosophy, botany and horticulture. He was sensitive to the beauty of sound, colour, shape and line. He loved an outdoor life; and he never saw the worst, but only the best, in everyone. When his setting of 'The Pied Piper' had left the printer's hands he heard that Richard Walthew too had set Browning's poem and that it was in the press. Thereupon he instructed his publisher, Novello, to delay publication so that Walthew might be the first in the field. Those who were present will not forget an incident at the Royal College when Coleridge-Taylor, then a student, was accorded an ovation after the performance of his first orchestral work. Modestly the young composer refused to take a call. But it was of no use; for the next moment Parry was seen shepherding Coleridge-Taylor along the gangway and pushing him up the steps of the platform. Another Parry was the Viking—the dare-devil yachtsman.

. . . Saturday evening, August 8th 1895, is a date in the musical calendar to be remembered. It marked the opening of the Queen's Hall Promenade concerts. Perfect though the acoustics may have been of the old St. James's Hall, the scene of the exploits of so many famous artists, we players were not sorry to quit that ill-ventilated Noah's Ark for the amenities of the new hall with its adequate platform space, comfortable chairs and a band room fitted with basin, towel, dressers and cupboards for our instruments. One's salary, however, was inadequate reward for the work demanded. The second half of these concerts never finished before eleven o'clock and often went on longer. One morning Wood said to me: "What has become of that large viola of yours? I miss its tone." "I am using a much better one", I replied, "a Giovanni Gagliano once owned by George Moralt, who played in quartets with Spohr." This Gagliano was owned in turn by three members of the Queen's Private Band, beginning with Auguste Moralt.

. . . A remark made by Lamoureux to the principal viola in his own orchestra to the effect that he had better take to earning his living by blacking boots was indicative of the man's temper. With a view, no doubt, of showing how things should be done, Robert Newman engaged Lamoureux to bring over his orchestra from Paris. The members of the Queen's Hall Orchestra were each given a ticket for the first concert, for the sake of their musical education. The audience was thin, but the performance was technically a model. Of uniform quality and smooth throughout, even in *fortissimo*, the tone of the strings reminded one of a string quintet's playing, so perfect was the ensemble and attenuated the sound. All the stringed instruments used were of one make only, Bernadel's. The Queen's Hall Orchestra, thanks to Wood, had improved out of all recognition during the first two-and-a-half years of its existence; but it could, of course, not be compared with the orchestra that had played under Lamoureux for sixteen years. When in 1898 he was asked to conduct the Queen's Hall Orchestra in combination with his own we knew nothing of the exacting ways of a French violinist-conductor like Lamoureux, whose technical knowledge enabled him to pick out at any moment an offender in the orchestra. During the morning rehearsal there were bumps that shook us in our seats. The rising tones of Lamoureux's voice made it clear that we were a target for abuse, but the details were not clear. Since we knew nothing of this or any side of the French language an interpreter was necessary. Percy Pitt was a diplomatist who could be trusted to smooth things over.

Monsieur Lamoureux requires the triple appoggiatura to be played by the double-basses each time closer to the first beat of the bar; the minim chords in the strings to be attacked and held throughout their length; the shorter chords more staccato, to resemble the strokes of an axe.

Pitt's neatly turned phrases hardly seemed to accord with the expressive look of the Gaulish cock, whose blood was evidently up and claws extended; but not knowing exactly what he had said we never moved a muscle—an attitude Lamoureux doubtless attributed to the phlegmatic temperament of the British. Pitt afterwards said: "If I had translated literally there would have been a riot in the orchestra." The magazine blew up at a rehearsal of the last programme of the series. Trouble arose over an alteration of bowing in the first violin part of the 'Freischütz' overture. One of the Queen's Hall fiddlers ventured to disagree. Taking the violin from the leader's hands, Lamoureux determined to show how it should be played; but he had lost his old mastery of the instrument. The

French players cannot have relished their conductor's indiscretion, but we, the perfidious sons of Albion, were charmed by what we heard, and applauded, for we would not have missed it for anything. The old man lost his temper. After some unedifying exchanges he threw down the stick and dismissed the orchestra. Nor did he appear at the next rehearsal until Pitt had been dispatched to his hotel to exert upon him his pacifying arts. The visit ended, however, with an harmonious cadence. After the sixth and last concert we returned to the band room to find there a large packing-case with a label addressed "To the Queen's Hall Orchestra from Monsieur Lamoureux". Soon we were toasting our tyrant in choice champagne, with shouts of "Vive Lamoureux! Vive la république!"

. . . Ysaye I can remember sitting cross-legged, while rehearsing Beethoven's Concerto, with a pipe in his mouth. Knowing that he had risen from the orchestral ranks, we drew certain conclusions, when he turned conductor, about his relation with the orchestra—conclusions which turned out mistaken. His quest for perfection was admirable in itself, but did not justify the holding of autopsies in the course of a rehearsal that was due to finish at one o'clock. There was a rule that a rehearsal should not last longer than three hours; nor was a reason wanting for finishing punctually, since we had to return home, eat a meal, dress and get back to the hall by a quarter to three. Ysaye's refusal to recognize this led to an insurrection. The rehearsal of works unknown to us by Franck and Vincent d'Indy did not go smoothly. The hard look and haughtiness on the clean-shaven face of this man with the massive head, a shock of long, sleek black hair, thick neck and broad shoulders, gave warning. At five minutes past one Barry Squire, leader of the second violins, rose and reminded Ysaye he had overrun his time. Ysaye told him to sit down again, since the rehearsal was not over. When B. S. retorted that for him it had finished and that he was going Ysaye turned on him like a tiger. White with anger W. H. Squire, the first cellist, sprang to his feet in his brother's defence. Picture a scene in a Continental Parliament at the moment when members have reached the point of pulling one another's noses, and you have some idea of the Queen's Hall platform at that moment. In the afternoon Willie Squire was lounging outside the hall, though it was high time he was in his place within. But Ysaye had refused to conduct if he were in the orchestra. Upon this his brother said he would not play. No orchestra would deny some overtime to a worthy conductor who had treated them fairly and not wasted time; but this is what Ysaye had failed to do. The bell rang, but we in

the band room did not budge. Three o'clock passed; the hand moved on to 3.15, and still there was no orchestra in the hall. The audience grew clamorous . . . 3.20 . . . 3.25 . . . On the stroke of 3.30, Ysaye having agreed to Squire's playing in the orchestra, we received instructions to go to the platform.

Let me finish on a different note by saying something about Ysaye the great fiddler, a rôle in which we old orchestral players knew him best. Thus only do we want to think of him—playing divinely with that Strad that seemed undersized and that Tourte bow that looked too short in relation to his vast bulk. Like all masters of the Brussels school, he had a perfect command of the bow. His tone possessed a warmth and magnetic power beyond that of all other players. An outstanding characteristic was his verve. Not that he allowed his temperament to get the upper hand. He was never forgetful of the composer's due. He never laboured a point, but took everything in his stride with the utmost ease and aplomb. Ysaye was neither a sentimentalist nor a platform magician performing fingerboard conjuring tricks. The mind of the audience was focused not on the man, but on the music he played.

The quality of his tone was ravishingly beautiful, and I say, after accompanying all the great violinists in the world during half a century, that Ysaye impressed me the most. He seemed to get more colours from the violin's tone than anyone else. He was unique as a concerto player; and a master of the three principal ways in which the bow can be applied to the strings, intensity of tone being produced by playing near the bridge and with the flat of the hair.

Such was Henry Wood's appreciation which, since I share it, I quote.

. . . The first Great War was raging. The Germans had surged into Belgium and were approaching the coast. Many who fled came to England. One morning in the Piccadilly Tube I saw opposite me one of these refugees. Time and trouble had wrought a complete change in him. Fourteen years had passed since I had last seen him. The proud, defiant look, once so familiar, had given place to one of utter dejection. My heart went out to him—it was Ysaye.

. . . We were about to sit down to a Sunday meal when Peter Wood, the old viola-player, was announced. "Have you still", he asked, "got that big viola I nicknamed Podgers?" "I have", I said. "I keep it for old association's sake." "An instrument with a tone like that", he went on, "would enable a player to keep his job, which is at the moment vital to one who has several mouths to

feed. I have a leather viola-case and a three-quarter-size violin for which I have no use. Will you make a swap?" Realizing how matters stood, I agreed. About a year later I met him again and inquired about the instrument. "I have parted with Podgers", he said. "It wore me out. I had no idea what I was up against till I began to use it." "What has become of it?" "Oh, I sold it to old D., who was playing in the Empire orchestra." "And he still has it?" "I cannot answer for that; he is dead!"

Should the present owner, whoever he may be, wish to dispose of Podgers I will offer, in exchange, a leather viola-case and a three-quarter-size violin.

BRITTON AND MOZART

A Challenge in the Form of Variations on an Unfamiliar Theme¹

BY HANS KELLER

Ars adeo latet sua. Ovid.

REMARKABLE similarities between Benjamin Britten and Mozart obtrude themselves on the suitably prejudiced observer, prejudiced, among other things, in favour of the view that presence of similarities does not imply absence of differences. People are wont to harp on the relation of Britten to Purcell (and to other composers, such as Mahler, whom they know Britten to admire). With Purcell, however, Britten has obviously established what in psychoanalysis one would call a superego identification—Purcell, that is to say is Britten's father, and there is a limit to one's interest in the continuous pointing out of evident family resemblances.

Yet there is a way in which both comparisons between Purcell and Britten, and between Mozart and Britten, are equally beneficial: they counteract the current over-emphasis on the historical aspect of music, to which, in the case of the comparison with Mozart, is to be added action against the over-emphasis on the ethnological and geographical aspects.

To be sure, the exaggerated importance attached to historical factors has itself to be considered historically, as a sign of our times: the significance of the temporal environment for human activities, mental or otherwise, has once again been discovered, and to discover means to overestimate.

In music, moreover, historical explanations are particularly welcome, for the factors that go to make the individual musical character are a rather mysterious affair, and it is one of the tragedies of the mind that it prefers mysterious explanations to waiting for the facts to become a little less mysterious.

Proceeding to Britten's work itself, one of those who overdo its historical aspect is Britten. "It is largely a matter of when one was born. If I had been born in 1813 instead of 1913 I should have been a romantic, primarily concerned to express my personality in

¹ As particularly the final section of this article may show, it may be regarded as the second of a number of diverse articles supplementary to Alfred Einstein's 'Mozart—His Character, His Work' (London, 1946). The first of these articles, 'Mozart and Boccherini', appeared in the November 1947 issue of 'The Music Review'.

music . . ." I don't think he would. True, he would have been *more* of a romantic, but in the sense in which he uses the word not primarily one: of all romantics he would have been least romantic. Taking into account everything that depth psychology teaches us about character formation in early childhood, it is fairly safe to assume that, other things being as nearly equal as they can be, a Benjamin Britten born in 1813 would not tend (again in his own words) towards the "point at which the composer would be the only man capable of understanding his own music". This is not to say that nature is necessarily more important for a man's artistic character than nurture, but rather that there are, not only in nature but also in nurture, character-building elements whose dependence on historical circumstances—given a large cultural frame like "western civilization"—is negligible. In early childhood (between minus nine months and six years) contemporary aesthetic trends are not usually of great importance even to a precocious individual such as Britten. To quote two instances cited by him, Picasso and Stravinsky did not just come because history told them to, but because they liked being told. History is of course always clever afterwards: had Picasso and Stravinsky not worked against individualistic art, she would not have betrayed that she had told them to, but would have told us that they behaved according to her previous precepts.

One does not, then, understand Britten as soon as one knows that he belongs to the twentieth century and why, and that he is an Englishman² and why. Trying to neutralize the over-stress on historical and also on geographical interpretations (important as these admittedly are) this article will, but for a small exception, disregard them altogether. Yet I think that Britten will on the whole agree with my suggestion "Britten often parallels Mozart". What is less, I believe that this suggestion is so glaringly obvious that any musical person must agree with it as soon as he starts thinking or merely dreaming about it. A few days ago I met a colleague whose musical judgment I have learnt to value. "I say, I want to write an article on Britten and Mozart", I told him. He thought for a while, then said: "Yes, that's true". Whereby the subject was closed. (It wasn't, of course: we talked for an hour about it. But it could have been, had we not felt compelled, assured of mutual admiration, to show off our insight.) Since, however, there are some musical people who are not sufficiently acquainted with Britten, and a great number of musical people who

² It may at the same time be worth mentioning that "from his childhood days on, [Mozart] was especially fond of England and the English". Alfred Einstein, 'Mozart—His Character, His Work' (London, 1946), p. 88f.

are not sufficiently acquainted with Mozart, for me to rest satisfied with just the title over the present article, I must put something under it. At the same time the musical reader will not require me to go into details, e.g. to produce some of those crippled musical quotations that often give to an article an added significance that is ornamental rather than illustrative.

I thought a good deal about the order in which to present the points of similarity between the two composers until I arrived at the conclusion that the best order will be not much of an order. For the relations, both psychological and aesthetic, between the various points are so manifold that any stringent order would be misleading, i.e., would automatically distract from the fact that a lot of other orders have also to be kept in view.

Often when another writer's view of either composer approximates to my own, I shall give his instead of or in addition to mine, in order to exclude as far as possible the objection that I am begging the question. And, wherever convenient, I shall of course, also let the composers speak for themselves.

Here, then, we go:—

The most obvious common characteristic of Britten and Mozart, their youthful maturity, need not detain us long; it has indeed already reached the pages of a popular magazine. Thus it just remains to point out that in both Britten's and Mozart's case youthful maturity has a double sense: maturity early attained and maturity retaining a youthful aspect. Busoni on Mozart: "He is young like a youth and wise like an aged man—never out of date and never modern . . ."

Both composers manifest their maturity in artistic behaviour that is largely classical. To me they seem to be masters in the solution of a paradox inherent in all classical art: the paradox of restrained, yet explicit emotion.

Both have an impeccable sense of form. With Britten this particular asset is even acknowledged by his sternest critics, while Mozart's sense of form can only be called, with Busoni, "extra-human".

Both are liable to be severely misunderstood (yes, *are*, for even in Mozart's case this is not yet a thing of the past), not only by their critics, but also by a great number of the great number of their followers. For their music is approachable on various levels, each seemingly giving a complete picture in itself, so that the superficial listener, moving on the most superficial level, may yet be strongly impressed and may think he knows all about what he hears. In this connection Mozart's attitude towards the "popular" should

be noted. Writing about the first three Vienna piano concertos he says (letter of December 28th 1782):

These concertos are a happy medium between what is too easy and too difficult; they are very brilliant, pleasing to the ear, and natural, without being vapid. There are passages here and there from which connoisseurs alone can derive satisfaction; but these passages are written in such a way that the less learned cannot fail to be pleased, though without knowing why . . .

Are we not here reminded of Britten's popularity, as well as of the fact that he is at times reproached with "making concessions"? In any case, Mozart and Britten are the only two composers I know who strongly and widely attract people who do not understand them.

Both composers are clever, supreme craftsmen, hence both are accused of trying to be clever and of lacking in the deeper emotions.

It is a pity that in his truly artistic and beautiful compositions [he] should carry his effort after originality too far, to the detriment of the sentiment and heart of his works. His new [compositions] . . . are much too highly spiced to be palatable for any length of time.

One of Britten's more favourable critics? No, one of the most favourable among the then contemporary critics of Mozart's six quartets dedicated to Haydn. "It is perhaps the one work . . . in which he achieved real sublimity". But this, surely, is one of Britten's "favourable" critics, talking, I don't know, of 'Grimes' (referring to "Now the Great Bear and the Pleiades"), or of the Donne Sonnets (referring to the sixth), or of 'Lucretia' (referring to the English horn and strings passage at Lucrece's last entry). . . . No, it is a critic of Mozart again, this time one of our own age, a very favourable one; nor is he just a scribe. It is in fact one who is elsewhere above criticism—Professor Dent on 'The Magic Flute' (1940). "The 'splendid isolation' of Mozartian music from the standpoint of biographical interpretation caused this music to be explained, in a period of romantic affiliation, as *academic in form, cold, empty, frivolous, superficial*".³ Precisely the same descriptions are not seldom given of Britten's music to-day, though we are not living in a period of romantic affiliation. And if it be objected that Britten, as distinct from Mozart, actually *is* cold and empty and superficial, we who find warmth and a rich and deep content in his music have at least this to be said in our favour: while one does not usually find things that are not there, one often does not find things that are. I would suggest that both composers sublimate not only their depths, but also their heights, *i.e.* they even sublimate their

³ Einstein, *op. cit.*, p. 109. Italics mine.

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sublimity. (Richard Strauss, incidentally, calls Mozart "the sublimest of all composers".)

In the music of neither Mozart nor Britten is there a sign of inhibitions (as distinct from restraint). In this respect their exact contrary is Brahms. It is this freedom from inhibitions that makes a certain class of neurotic listeners belittle their works: we cannot easily bear it if others do not suffer from what we deny suffering from ourselves. Hand in hand with the absence of intra-musical inhibitions goes a delight in accepting, and working within, given limitations. With Mozart this point is self-evident. And when we come to Britten, I must ask the reader not to believe the composer too much when he gives a variety of practical reasons for the scoring of 'Lucretia' and 'Albert Herring'; for it is clear that these reasons offer him a welcome excuse for trying what he can do within the limitations of the chamber opera.

Ease, facility, effortless skill—these points are obvious in the case of either composer. Among their admirers both Mozart and Britten are known to be able to "manage anything". I hope there will never be any opportunity of proving that Britten can even manage things that bore him stiff; in Mozart's case such proof is furnished by the F minor Fantasy for what is called a barrel-organ (*Orgelwalze*) or clock (*Uhr*), "a kind of composition which I detest", as he writes to his wife. But the general fact that both composers can write on commission as if they did not write on commission is of course established. The essence of such music for a special occasion does not with them betray external compulsion. Here the history of the Mozart Requiem is symbolic: an outer impulse is changed into an inner one.

The continued success of such impulse-changing does not depend merely on versatility, but also on deep-reaching agility. Britten is perhaps the most agile composer of our time. Busoni on Mozart: "He is universal through his agility". Universality itself has many aspects with Mozart and Britten. Two of these are particularly significant, both aesthetically and psychologically:

(1) A German writer on music, Carl Gollmick (1796-1866), divides composers into two classes (he would!), i.e. "melodists" and "contrapuntists", and proceeds to show that Mozart satisfies the requirements of both these classes. If one wants to use this objectionable division—as a stenographic makeshift—for showing that it cannot be used in Mozart's case, and why not, one can also apply it, in almost the same way, to Britten.

(2) Both composers have a sense at once of humour and of tragedy

which they manifest quite clearly and which yet tends to go unrecognized by many of us because we do not easily permit ourselves to indulge, in our turn, in this double sense, and because we often find it difficult to bear contrary standpoints in the same man or work, or expressed at the same time. Yet, as the psycho-analyst O. Rank has clearly recognized apropos of 'Don Giovanni', music is uniquely suited "to express, at the same time, different tendencies".

This point merits a little further attention, for which purpose I must, alas, once more differ from Professor Dent, high esteem for whom it is needless to stress. Replying to the time-honoured question whether 'Don Giovanni' is a serious or a comic opera, he says: "The simplest plan is to take the opera as its author and composer intended—as an amusing comedy, with a touch of social satire and a great deal of fantastic impossibility". One is all for taking the opera as all this, but Dent wants it to be taken as this alone. The libretto may stand such a one-sided interpretation, but the music does not. The question whether 'Don Giovanni' is a serious or a comic opera does not indeed exist: it is both⁴. Similarly, 'Così fan tutte' is not just "an elaborate artificial comedy" (Dent). The great E major aria, for instance, suggests otherwise.

With Britten the whole story has started all over again. A prominent and otherwise perspicacious critic has made me very unhappy with his remark, apropos of 'Lucretia' (which, upon thorough study, I deem a great work), that the composer's bent was not for "tragic or even human feeling", but solely "for artificial comedy". Meanwhile, Britten's first comic opera, 'Albert Herring', has itself shown that he is able, in the words of Charles Stuart, to take "excursions into a rarer world, with the earthiness of comic opera left behind and below". We must recognize that there are two sides to Britten⁵. In fact I personally think that whenever there is only one side to an artist it is a wrong one.

Both composers create in the same way. Britten: "Usually I

⁴ The two schools of interpretation, the "tragic" and the "comic", both equally one-sided, can be roughly located along historical and geographical co-ordinates. As far as the latter magnitude goes, the tragic school is predominantly German, the comic predominantly English.

⁵ On the basis of psychological reflections such as I have sketched above, *sub* (2), I ventured the prediction some time ago ('Glyndebourne Preface', in June issue of 'Sound'), that "the serious musical aspect of ['Albert Herring'] will tend to be underestimated, or even neglected". Many reviewers have, unfortunately, proved me right. Among the exceptions there is, of course, Desmond Shawe-Taylor who, apropos of the threnody in the last act, points out that "it is such moments as these which make it a superficial judgment to write the work off as a farce or a charade". ('Statesman', June 28th.)

have the music complete in my head before putting pen to paper". In this respect their exact contrary is Beethoven. They also create, if I may say so, on the same way:

When not flying or sailing to foreign opera houses and concert halls . . . Britten is perpetually rushing off to catch trains for voice-and-piano recitals with Peter Pears in remote provincial towns. The business of musical creation goes on serenely among the bustle and the baggage. Looking unseeingly through train windows . . . Britten composes as fluently as if he were sitting in a soundproof cell, with quires of manuscript paper before him and a grand piano at his elbow.⁶

And travel does not interrupt Mozart's creative activity; it rather stimulates it. When long journeys are out of the question, as for example, during the last ten years in Vienna, he is constantly changing his residence . . . from the town out into the suburbs, and from the suburbs back again into town.⁷

Britten's parallel manœuvres proceed of course from London to Snape and from Snape to London.

Scoring: strictly speaking, this problem does not appear to be one with Mozart and Britten (except where they are concerned with other composers' works: 'Messiah', 'Matinées musicales'). "With Mozart", Arthur Hutchings aptly observes,⁸ "such problems [of balance, tone-colour, variety, etc.] do not seem to exist. He may have been lucky; the band may have been at just the right stage of development to make instrumental thinking but one element in musical thinking as a whole . . ."⁹ (Dear old History again, though it is true that Hutchings later rejects her claims.) Compare this with what one of the most discerning critics of Britten, Desmond Shawe-Taylor, says about this composer's "musical thinking as a whole":

One difference between Britten and most of his contemporaries is that, in the process of composition, his imaginative "inner ear" is listening, all the time and at full stretch, to what he is doing; fascinating as his music looks on paper—for he is a master of figuration and every kind of musical device [as Mozart is.—H. K.]—I feel tolerably sure that his ideas never occur to him as anything but sheer sensuous sound, and that it is to this fact that they owe the force and freshness with which they strike the listener's ear.

Thus, for instance, Mozart's and Britten's compositions for orchestra are not orchestrated, but orchestral.

⁶ "Profile—Benjamin Britten" (unsigned), 'The Observer', October 27th 1946.

⁷ Einstein, *op. cit.*, p. 4f.

⁸ 'A Note on the "Additional Accompaniments"', 'The Music Review', VII, 3, p. 161.

⁹ Hutchings's sentence ends thus: ". . . as it is to a composer writing a chamber work". The relevance of this phrase, however, escapes me: surely it needs qualifying. Brahms, for instance, certainly conceived music in an abstract manner even where he was concerned with chamber music, much of which clearly exhibits his surmounting instrumental problems.

Both composers seem to derive much from melodic inspiration. More materially, they are liable to be inspired by the human voice (as also by language, including foreign language), and indeed influenced by individual voices (as well as by instruments and instrumentalists). As regards Mozart, "opera was always composed for a special occasion and for particular singers; the choice of singers influenced the vocal style and other characteristics as well".¹⁰ The same is true of the three operas Britten has written so far; even '*Grimes*' was "considerably influenced" by the Sadler's Wells Opera Company.¹¹ It would seem to me that when Britten writes for tenor or soprano he is in advance of himself in a similar way as Mozart when writing a piano concerto (in which he can let himself be inspired not only by his piano playing but also, in various ways though indirectly, by vocal ideas). At the same time Britten the pianist has for me some striking similarities with what I picture to be Mozart the pianist; but as I have not heard Mozart I shall not enlarge on this point.

In any case Mozart's piano concertos and Britten's tenor compositions are instances of their common love for virtuosity which, together with their common love of the dramatic, is also part of their intense common love for opera. Both, moreover, carry their symphonic thinking into opera, and their operatic thinking into extra-operatic music.

As for the more extra-musical aspects of their operas, the psychological and sociological theme of rebellion plays an important part. Even '*The Magic Flute*', it must be remembered, "was a work of rebellion"¹²; '*Grimes*' and '*Lucretia*', as well as '*Herring*', centre on the motive of opposition to (society's) tyranny.

Operatic technique (Mozart to his father, October 13th 1781):

Why, an opera is sure of success when the plot is well worked out, the words written solely for the music and not shoved in here and there to suit some miserable rhyme . . . I mean, words or even entire verses which ruin the composer's whole idea. Verses are indeed the most indispensable element for music—but rhymes—solely for the sake of rhyming—the most detrimental. These high and mighty people who set to work in this pedantic fashion will always come to grief, both they and their music. The best thing of all is when a good composer, who understands the stage and is talented enough to make sound suggestions, meets an able poet, that true phoenix; in that case no fears need be entertained as to the applause, even of the ignorant.

¹⁰ Einstein, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

¹¹ Benjamin Britten, '*Peter Grimes: Introduction*', in '*Peter Grimes*', ed. Eric Crozier (London, 1945).

¹² Einstein, *op. cit.*, p. 465.

Britten¹³:

This working together of the poet and composer seems to be one of the secrets of writing a good opera. In the general discussion on the shape of the work—the plot, the division into recitatives, arias, ensembles and so on—the musician will have many ideas that may stimulate and influence the poet. Similarly when the libretto is written and the composer is working on the music, possible alterations may be suggested by the flow of the music, and the libretto altered accordingly . . . The composer and poet should at all stages be working in the closest contact, from the most preliminary stages right up to the first night.

Joseph Gregor¹⁴ has pointed out that, in spite of what there was before him, Mozart may in some respects be regarded as a founder (a "second founder") of opera. The same can already be said to-day, as far as the modern British—perhaps not only British—field goes, of Britten.

We cannot leave the subject of opera without quoting a criticism of 'Don Giovanni', or rather of a review of 'Don Giovanni', whose resemblance with various criticisms of allegedly too favourable reactions to Britten's operas is, it will be admitted, almost uncannily striking. Einstein¹⁵ rightly reminds us that

No biography should fail to reproduce . . . —as evidence of contemporary presumption, especially characteristic of Berlin—the dictum of an anonymous writer who was moved by an enthusiastic description of 'Don Giovanni' by Bernhard Anselm Weber in the 'Musicalisches Wochenblatt' of 1792 to the following reprimand: "His report of Mozart's 'Don Juan' is highly exaggerated and one-sided. No one will misjudge Mozart, the man of great talents and the expert, prolific and pleasing composer. Yet I do not know any well-grounded connoisseur of art who considers him a correct, not to say finished, artist; still less will the critic of sound judgment consider him, in respect to poetry, a proper and fine composer".

When they are not accused of striving after originality, Mozart and Britten are accused of lacking originality, of eclecticism. In Mozart's case such an accusation will necessarily be indirect, because unfortunately it isn't done. (If it were, the lack of understanding in many a half-hearted "admirer" would more easily be seen.) One way of thus indirectly attacking Mozart is to discover too much of him in Christian Bach, and to end up by playing Christian Bach instead of Mozart.¹⁶

With regard to Britten's "eclecticism", the accusations are of course direct and numerous. Instead of allowing ourselves to be detained by them, let us look at the whole question from the other,

¹³ Benjamin Britten, Preface to 'The Rape of Lucretia', (London, 1945).

¹⁴ 'Kulturgegeschichte der Oper', (Zürich, 1941).

¹⁵ Op. cit., p. 134.

¹⁶ Pace Christian Bach's mastery and all that Mozart owes to it.

understanding side. To begin with, Mozart again. Here is an eminent musicologist on his "eclecticism"; we shall easily see how this applies to Britten:

. . . [Mozart] united the musical treasures of all nations of his time. This could easily have led to a mixture without character, but . . . Mozart did not imitate anyone or anything; the external appearance of music was but a means of expression to him, never technique . . . It is not enough . . . to say that content and form balance each other in Mozart's music, for this unity is style, and while the style is constant the variety of its manifestations is as great as the number of his works. Mozart never created really new forms, but by regarding the existing styles not as unities but as phenomena which contribute towards a general style, he created a universal all-inclusive style. . . .¹⁷

We must not forget that Mozart was the child of an era customarily called the "golden age" of musical art. Such a golden age . . . offers to the genius the richest treasures of the various artistic forms . . . He simply takes the gifts of his epoch, intact, and, as self-evident matter, utilizes them at his will . . . Mozart shuffled [the creations of the eighteenth century] like a pack of cards and the result was a strikingly original and individual world.¹⁸

This is all true, I suggest, except for the over-stress on history: Britten is doing a similar shuffling without being the child of a golden age.

Let us now hear Britten's own words on his "eclecticism". After implying that he passes from manner to manner "as a bee passes from flower to flower", he declares: "I do not see why I should lock myself inside a purely personal idiom. I write in the manner best suited to the words, theme or dramatic situation which I happen to be handling". We here remember that Einstein speaks of Mozart's "astonishing capacity for imitation, assimilation and elaboration of whatever suited him"¹⁹, of his being "the greatest master of style, or rather of all musical styles"²⁰. Indeed Mozart himself wrote to his father (February 7th 1778): "As you know, I can more or less adopt or imitate any kind and any style of composition". Einstein suggests²¹ that this capacity accounts for Mozart's super-nationality, and I would add that it also accounts for Britten's, whose success among foreign musicians in this country and abroad is remarkable. It may be interesting to note in this connection that Britten's solution of the modern sonata problem in his C major Quartet has perhaps been most strongly appreciated

¹⁷ P. H. Láng, 'Music in Western Civilization' (1942), p. 636.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

¹⁹ Einstein, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

²⁰ p. 129.

²¹ p. 103.

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by two Austrian musicians: Erwin Stein²² and the present writer²³. According to the music critic of 'The Times'²⁴ the sonata form "is for all its universal validity an essentially Austrian way of thinking in music".

Britten's afore-mentioned remarks on his "eclecticism" also include a reminder that has already been partly quoted at the beginning of this article: "The romantics became so intensely personal that it looked as though we were going to reach a point at which the composer would be the only man capable of understanding his own music." And Mozart writes to his father (December 28th 1782): "The golden mean of truth in all things is no longer either known or appreciated. In order to win applause one must write stuff which is so inane that a cabby could sing it, or so unintelligible that it pleases precisely because no sensible man can understand it . . ." Again, could not the following, too, have been written *mutatis mutandis*, by Britten?:

This is what I think [of a Concerto for two flutes by Friedrich Hartmann Graf, 1727-1795]. It is not at all pleasing to the ear, not a bit natural. He often plunges into a new key far too brusquely and it is all quite devoid of charm. When it was over, I praised him very highly, for he really deserves it. The poor fellow must have taken a great deal of trouble over it and he must have studied hard enough. At last a clavichord, one of Stein's, was brought out of the inner room, an excellent instrument, but covered with dust and dirt. Herr Graf, who is director here, stood there transfixed, like someone who has always imagined that his wanderings from key to key are quite unusual and now finds that one can be even more unusual and yet not offend the ear.²⁵

Reflecting upon Mozart's temperament, Einstein says:

He yielded to an influence quite ingenuously, quite in the feminine fashion. He strove least of all for originality; because he was entirely certain of the Mozartian, personal stamp of his product. *Facile inventis addere* cannot apply to him; this adage applies indeed only to science or technique. What he derived from others was for him a fertilization, which eased the course of the spiritual and musical pregnancy and birth.²⁶

And Desmond Shawe-Taylor, after mentioning, *inter alia*, Verdi's and Handel's influence upon 'Albert Herring', remarks that "in spite of such links, the whole score remains immensely characteristic of its composer"²⁷. The whole problem of Mozart's and Britten's

²² Analysis of ' Benjamin Britten—String Quartet, No. 2, in C, Op. 36' (London 1946).

²³ ' Benjamin Britten's Second Quartet', 'Tempo', No. 18 (London, March 1947).

²⁴ ' English Chamber Music ', 'The Times', (January 17th 1947).

²⁵ Mozart to his father, October 14th 1777.

²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

²⁷ ' Britten's Comic Opera ', 'The Listener', June 12th 1947.

originality and eclecticism can, I think, be summed up in Einstein's words: "Mozart belongs, like Bach, to the rare species of the conservative revolutionaries, or the revolutionary conservative".²⁸

In a paragraph on the youthful aspects of Mozart Láng²⁹ thinks that in the composer lives all the eighteenth century's

youthful delicacy and feminine grace, . . . its brightness and naturalness, . . . its flexibility, its loving care for the little and the fine, its fondness for variation and for the characteristic . . . But this lovable youthfulness ripens into maturity, and playful freedom and moodiness are harnessed by schooling and discipline, ingenuous feelings are formed by classic measure, ideas are deepened to symbols of universal significance.

Note how very exactly the spiritual tendencies here enumerated apply to Britten, although—neo-classicism apart—one does not find the affinities between our own time and the eighteenth century very striking.

One may at the same time concede that the form in which Britten's fondness for variation quite often manifests itself, *i.e.* the ostinato, is in part historically determined.

In and beyond the art of variation, the fundamental musical principle of repetition is treated in a similar way by the two composers. Both mechanical reiteration and narcissistic re-citation are absent; thematic relationships, though frequent and really simple, often go unrecognized by the superficial listener because in the process of transformation or transplantation of themes or fragments far-reaching changes of emotional significance are secured, though of course at the same time an underlying emotional identity is preserved.

The strong drive of either composer towards economy (as distinct from poverty) of thematic material is just as obvious as the fact that economy, in either case, also radiates in other directions, *e.g.* the instrumental.

In an article entitled 'Back to Mozart?' Felix von Weingartner once remarked:

. . . thus I want to give the following answer to the question put in the title: To create, with our modern means of expression, *in Mozart's spirit*—this would perhaps be the right thing . . . But . . . can there be any question of "back"? I think it must much more truly be said: "*Forward to Mozart!*"³⁰

Can it be chance that Weingartner was, as far as I know, the first to call Britten (after hearing the oboe Quartet in 1934) a genius?

Before I try to round off my thesis I should like to quote some

²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 162.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 624.

³⁰ His italics.

more of Busoni's aphorisms on Mozart. Their relevance will, I trust, be appreciated at this stage without further comment. "He doesn't risk anything foolhardy". "He is capable of saying very much, but never says too much". "He carries all characters within himself, but only as an exhibitor and portraitist". "Together with the puzzle he gives you the solution". "He can always draw water from any glass because he has emptied none". "His smile is not that of a diplomat or actor, but that of a pure nature—yet that of a man of the world". "He is spirited without any nervousness—idealist without becoming immaterial, realist without ugliness". "It is the architectural that is most closely related to his art".

"In respect to universality", writes Einstein, "Mozart may be compared only with other great masters; and in our comparisons we shall limit ourselves to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries"³¹ He would not, I believe, thus limit himself if he knew Britten's music.

Nearest [to Mozart], perhaps, is Handel, the master of the cantata, the opera, the oratorio, the concerto grosso, the sonata—but we are stopped short already. Did not all this flow from one unified, mighty source, Italian vocalism, the *bel canto* of the monumental aria?³²

On the basis of the present article, I submit, we cannot be stopped short in this or any other way when we compare Britten with Mozart. Britten, that is to say, is not only immeasurably nearer to Mozart than Handel because his (Britten's) universality does not spring from one unified source, but also because, beneath, above and beyond the sphere of universality, Britten and Mozart have far more in common than Handel and Mozart. "And was Bach universal? To be sure, he left no corner uncultivated in the fields of instrumental and vocal music . . . Actually, however, all this, too, grows from one root—instrumental music . . ."³³ And so it goes on. Gluck, Einstein's next object of comparison, need not, it will be admitted, detain us. "Both Haydn and Beethoven are cramped by the word, they speak most freely in the instrumental fields".³⁴ And even putting the question of universality apart again, can it be suggested that Haydn-Mozart comparisons or Beethoven-Mozart comparisons are comparable with a comparison between Britten and Mozart?

And this would bring us to Schubert, the composer of the "Unfinished" and the D minor Quartet, and of hundreds of perfect songs, the only one who could be compared to Mozart, if it were not

³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 104.

that, although he wrote operas too, the dramatic, the scenic, the feeling for the stage, were denied to him."³⁵

I submit that Britten stands far nearer to Mozart than does Schubert, once more not only in respect of universality (*cf.* particularly "the dramatic, the scenic, the feeling for the stage"), but also—as I hope the present paper tends to show—in almost every other respect. In fact, to me personally it seems that the only deep-rooted musico-characterological difference between Britten and Mozart is that the one is often strongly inspired by nature while the other is an indoor composer.

Passing, for obvious reasons, over the rest of Einstein's list of composers to be compared, or rather not to be compared, with Mozart, we arrive at this admirable summing-up of Mozart's universality:

When one considers the somnambulistic surefootedness and grace with which Mozart masters the vocal and the instrumental, mass and opera, quartet and concerto, one's admiration grows immeasurably at the phenomenon of his uniqueness as a universal musician.³⁶

This is not the time, and I am not the man, to decide about the relative greatness of Mozart and Britten; to assess how far with Britten, too, "the world-spirit wishes to show that here is pure sound, conforming to a weightless cosmos, triumphant over all chaotic earthliness, spirit of the world-spirit"³⁷; but as one who is soaked in the music of both Mozart and Britten I may be allowed to claim that for the first time Mozart, the universal musician who masters everything with a somnambulistic surefootedness and grace, has found a companion. It follows that I regard Britten as the greatest of all contemporary composers whose music I understand.

³⁵ *Ibid.* ³⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 105.

³⁷ The concluding sentence of Einstein's book, p. 471.

VERDI AND MANZONI: AN ATTEMPTED EXPLANATION

By BARBARA REYNOLDS

ON September 3rd 1872 Giuseppina Strepponi, the former opera singer and Verdi's second wife, wrote to her friend the Contessa Maffei as follows:

Manzoni and Verdi! I think about them frequently; they seem to me a true subject for meditation. But I am altogether unequal to the task of solving the obscure problem which they present.

The obscure problem which Giuseppina perceived was a religious one; it is by no means part of the intention of the present article to attempt to solve it, but merely to restate it and to consider its implications together with those of other strange aspects of the Verdi-Manzoni relationship. Speaking of her husband in the same letter, Giuseppina had said:

Verdi is busy with his grotto and with his garden. He is extremely well and in the best of spirits. Happy man! May God keep him so for many years. There are certain virtuous natures who need to believe in God; and others, equally perfect, who are happy not believing in anything and merely observing rigorously every precept of strict morality.

Verdi's wife touches here upon one of the fundamental differences between these two Italian artists, each of whom was acclaimed by contemporaries as a monumental symbol of Italian aspirations and ideals. Alessandro Manzoni, in his works and in his life, was for Italians almost an incarnation of religious faith. Verdi, on the contrary, was not an orthodox believer. His letters to the Contessa Maffei, for instance, show him to be a pessimist and a free-thinker. Yet the death of Manzoni inspired him to write the *Requiem Mass*, one of the few religious compositions which came from his pen. Luzio speaks of it as a miracle which only Verdi's immense veneration for Manzoni was able to bring about.¹ Verdi's feeling for Manzoni was perhaps the nearest he ever came to religion. Luzio seems to regard it in the light of a substitute for faith: "his idolatrous veneration for Manzoni", he calls it, and Francis Toye, too, speaks of "his almost mystical veneration for the author".²

¹ Alessandro Luzio, 'Il carteggio di Giuseppe Verdi con la Contessa Maffei', in 'Studi e bozzetti di storia letteraria e politica', Vol. I (Milan, 1910), footnote, p. 401.

² Francis Toye, 'Giuseppe Verdi: his Life and Works' (London, 1931), p. 454.

This state of mind of Verdi's concerning Manzoni has often been referred to, but, so far as I am aware, no attempt has been made to account for it. Was there something in the character and temperament of these two personalities which might explain their relationship? Can it be accounted for at all? I hope in the course of this article to show that it can. The explanation, as I perceive it, lies for the most part outside the two persons concerned; it is necessary first, however, to consider them in contrast and in comparison with each other. The differences between them, which are more obvious than the affinities, I will enumerate first.

To begin with, their social origin and early environment were very different. Verdi was a man of the people, the son of an inn-keeper. Manzoni was a landowner and something of an aristocrat. Pietro Manzoni, the man whom he regarded as his father, was on the fringe of Lombard nobility. His actual father, Giovanni Verri, was the younger brother of the economist Pietro and of the novelist Alessandro Verri, a family of intellectual and artistic distinction. On his mother's side there was his grandfather, Cesare Beccaria, author of the famous treatise on penal law, 'Dei delitti e delle pene', a connection of which Manzoni was justly proud. As a young man in Paris he used always to sign his letters Alessandro Manzoni-Beccaria. Manzoni was not a wealthy man, but he was never obliged to earn his living. When his mother inherited the property of her lover, Carlo Imbonati, the Manzoni family were established in style with a spacious country house at Brusuglio, three miles out of Milan, and a large town house in the city itself.

In physique the two men were also very different. Verdi, at least from middle life on, possessed robust health and vitality. Manzoni, on the contrary, was an invalid, subject to fits of giddiness, unable ever to go out alone, unable even to be left in a room alone. His letters to his friends, from about 1820 onwards, are veritable health bulletins, and there were periods when for days and even weeks ill-health prevented him from working.

What are these two artists likely to have had in common? The theatre? Verdi's love of the theatre requires no emphasis. Manzoni was the author of two dramas. He was, in fact, a pioneer in the development of the form of Italian drama. His first play, 'Il Conte di Carmagnola', written in 1819, was a challenge to the unities of time and place, the violation of which he justified at great length in a learned article on the history of drama and of dramatic criticism.³ There is no doubt that Manzoni was interested in drama, but this is not necessarily the same thing as being interested in the theatre.

³ 'Lettre à Monsieur Chauvet sur l'unité de temps et de lieu dans la tragédie'.

The facts, in Manzoni's case, indicate quite the reverse and show him to have been in such striking contrast to Verdi that they seem to me to constitute relevant and interesting material. In 1828 seven new theatres were opened at Florence; one of these, *Il Nuovo*, booked 'Il Conte di Carmagnola' for the inaugural performance, and the censor, Attilio Zuccagni-Orlandini, wrote to ask Manzoni's consent, saying that the greatest care would be taken with the production, scenery and acting. Manzoni was much alarmed and replied: "The idea of a performance of my works fills me with insuperable apprehension and aversion." He begs the censor to abandon the project immediately. His dramas, he says, are constructed without the slightest regard for stage effect, or for stage conventions. Moreover, he confesses, the sound of hissing would so appal him that the emotion of horror it would inspire would far exceed the pleasure he might derive from the applause of a thousand people. He was altogether so discouraging that the suggestion was dropped. A few months later, the actor Luigi Vestri put on 'Carmagnola' at the Goldoni theatre at Florence, without asking Manzoni's consent, himself playing the part of the Count. The effect of the play on the audience was recorded in contemporary newspaper articles, from which it appears that it was quite unsuitable for stage presentation. At first, with the opening speech to the Senate, in which the Venetian Doge sets forth the main situation, the audience listened attentively, but restlessness was noticeable during the long speeches of Carmagnola in which he expresses sentiments of pride and resolution, but which are, to quote a contemporary critic, "di una duratura eccessiva". The second act, with the scene between the Milanese generals who are divided in their views as to whether or not they should stand and fight the Venetians, had been declared by Goethe to be perfectly adapted for effective presentation on the stage. But Goethe had never seen it acted. It proved in reality unbearably monotonous.

The first performance of 'Adelchi' in 1843 by the Reale Sarda Compagnia was an even greater failure. It was long and carefully rehearsed, and scenery and costumes were specially designed. Angelo Brofferio, himself a dramatist as well as dramatic critic, wrote with severity in the 'Messaggo Torinese', on May 20th 1843:

The result was what it was bound to be, what it could not help being: a frost, and it would have been a worse frost still if it had not been for the veneration which all Italians feel for Alessandro Manzoni.

Looked at from the historical, philosophical and political point of view, 'Adelchi' is the work of a man of genius; looked at as a

dramatic work, it is cold, arid, laboured, lacking in development, in action, in anything and everything that constitutes drama: thus Brofferio.

It seems unlikely that Manzoni and Verdi would have discussed the theatre together. Nor would they have been likely to discuss music. Attempts have been made to prove that Manzoni was musical, although he himself declared that he was not. When Rossini died Manzoni was asked to collaborate in the publication of a commemorative album. He refused, saying that he knew nothing about music. Guerrazzi, the patriot and author, wrote to the press, urging that Manzoni be persuaded to reconsider his decision, saying that he must be musical since he was a poet; he had refused only out of modesty, or because he was intimidated by the thought of counterpoint. More recently Enrico Fondi, writing in the '*Rivista Musicale Italiana*'⁴, attempted to prove that Manzoni was musical, basing himself upon the same assumption as Guerrazzi, which he seems to take for granted, that a poet and a musician are fundamentally the same. The evidence assembled by Fondi is worth examining. To begin with, we have Manzoni's statement, already quoted, that he was "non intendente di musica". But this might be explained, as Guerrazzi asserts, by modesty on Manzoni's part. Next we have two conflicting statements by two contemporaries who knew him well: Cesare Cantù and Manzoni's step-son, Stefano Stampa. Cantù, in his '*Reminiscenze di Alessandro Manzoni*', said that Manzoni knew nothing about music and took very little pleasure in it. His stepson, on the other hand, in his work '*Alessandro Manzoni, la sua famiglia, i suoi amici*', said that he was fond of music and often used to hum French popular songs which he had learnt as a young man in Paris, and which were not easy to remember by reason of their rather difficult rhythm. Stefano Stampa also recalled that on one occasion two members of Manzoni's family were playing Mendelssohn's "Italian" Symphony arranged for four hands on the piano. When they reached the end of the second movement, Manzoni, who was reading, looked up and said "How beautiful, how stupendous that is!", and asked for it to be played again.

Fondi's evidence, so painstakingly collected and reverently interpreted, when looked at objectively indicates only the contrary of what he wishes to prove. He says, for instance, "Manzoni was very musical. But he had no special talent for it, and he never put himself out for it, to the extent of breaking his routine and going to a concert". And again, "Manzoni was very fond of music. If a

⁴ Vol. XVII, pp. 628-45.

member of his family played the piano he was not at all bored, but said that he enjoyed his reading all the more".

Manzoni's ill-health is an important factor to be taken into consideration in this connection. A characteristic of his condition was a fear of crowds, which explains, in part at any rate, why he never went to concerts or to the theatre. Moreover, evidence with regard to his physical state suggests that upon occasion he had a positive dislike of certain musical sounds. He was a victim of acute nervous irritability; his hearing was particularly sensitive, and he hated sudden noises. Even the sound of the birds singing in his garden at Brusuglio got on his nerves to such an extent that once he shouted to the gardener, "Kill them! Kill them!" From a comparison he uses in '*I promessi sposi*' it is evident that the particular medley of sounds which is generally pleasant to the ear of a musician was quite distasteful to him. In Chapter V the shouting and wrangling at the dinner-table of the villain, Don Rodrigo, is compared to the tuning of instruments:

as when, during an interval, each player tunes his instrument, making it shriek as loudly as he can, in order to hear it distinctly in the midst of the noise made by all the others. . . .

If Manzoni had really been fond of music, some expression of his enjoyment would have found its way into his writings. There is no doubt that Dante loved music: the episode of Casella in '*Purgatorio*' is proof enough of this, with its remembrance of earlier delight:

Se nuova legge non ti toglie
memoria o uso all' amoroso canto
che mi solea quetar tutte mie voglie. . . .⁵

and the recapturing in writing of the imagined pleasure, no less real because imagined, of hearing Casella sing:

"Amor che nella mente mi ragiona"
cominciò elli allor sì dolcemente,
che la dolcezza ancor dentro mi sona. . . .⁶

There is nothing comparable to this in Manzoni's writings. '*I promessi sposi*' is relatively lacking in sound-effects. Bells are used in Chapter VIII to sound the alarm for Don Abbondio, but with no pleasurable intent; on the contrary, their ringing is used deliberately to heighten the distress and confusion of the whole episode. Bells are also mentioned in one of the Sacred Hymns ('*La passione*'), but for the reason that on the Day of Crucifixion they are silent.

Of Fondi's evidence there remains one strange incident of which he makes a great deal. It is known that Manzoni's famous ode

⁵ '*Purgatorio*', II, 106-8.

⁶ *Ibid.* 112-14.

'Il cinque maggio' was inspired by the news of Napoleon's death. It has often been recounted that he was out in the grounds of his country house when the newspaper was brought to him. He sat down on a bench and pondered the tidings. The ode began to take shape in his mind, and in two days it was completed. Stefano Stampa adds the following: on coming into the house, with the urge strong upon him to compose, Manzoni summoned his wife and bade her sit down at the piano and play, "Anything, anything, it doesn't matter what you play, only don't stop". Enrichetta, the ever docile Enrichetta, did as she was told. For two days she played, at the end of which the great ode was completed.

'Il cinque maggio', then, would seem to have been born of music, or so Enrico Fondi claims. It seems more likely, in view of the other evidence we have seen, that Manzoni was so unresponsive to music that, providing it was not strident, it had almost the same effect as cottonwool on his ears, and served to blot out other distractions. There is another link between this ode and music, for Verdi himself composed a setting for it, as he did also for the choruses of the two dramas, 'Il Conte di Carmagnola' and 'Adelchi'.⁷

The question of the music inspired by Manzoni's works, and particularly of the operas based on 'I promessi sposi', are of some interest. On the first publication of 'Carmagnola', while Manzoni was in Paris, his friend Ermès Visconti undertook to approach Rossini to set to music the chorus, or lyrical interlude, which occurs at the end of Act II. As far as I have been able to ascertain Rossini never did so, but, as we have seen, Verdi undertook the task of setting this as well as 'Il cinque maggio' and the two choruses from 'Adelchi'. In addition to this, three of the Sacred Hymns ('Natale', 'Passione', 'Risurrezione') were set to music by Pietro Torrassi; an opera based on 'Adelchi' was produced at Vicenza in 1852, with music by Giuseppe Apolloni. There have also been at least six operas based on 'I promessi sposi': the earliest is that of 1833 by Pietro Bresciani; the next was by Gervasi in 1834. Next came a Danish work by Franz Gläser, 'Bryllupet ved Como-Søen' ('The Wedding by Lake Como'), to a libretto by no other than Hans Andersen, produced at Copenhagen in 1849. The best-known is that by Ponchielli, which was first produced at Cremona in 1856 and then at Milan in 1872, a year before Manzoni's death, the libretto being revised on this occasion by the poet Emilio Praga, who was one of the few detractors of Manzoni. It was Ponchielli's first opera. The libretto has been

⁷ Toye, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

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translated into English and the work is recorded as having been produced at Glasgow as recently as 1931. Next in chronological order comes the opera 'I promessi sposi' by Andrea Traveati, and finally Enrico Petrella's opera of the same name, produced in 1869 at Lecco. Petrella was a very popular composer in his day, and this opera is said to have been his best work. Manzoni himself was present at the first performance. The work was received with great enthusiasm; Petrella was recalled twenty-seven times and was embraced by the author.

There is an echo of Verdi's reaction to this work of Petrella's in one of his letters to Contessa Maffei. He says "I envy that blunderer of a Petrella, who has had a letter from Manzoni. And I, imbecile that I am, have never had the courage to write to him . . ."⁸

Despite the obvious differences between Manzoni and Verdi, certain important affinities existed which account in part, though by no means entirely, for their relationship. One taste they had in common was their love of country life. They both took profound pleasure in the cultivation of the soil, Verdi at his estate at Sant' Agata, where the model farms were famed for their advanced system of agriculture, and Manzoni at his estate at Brusuglio, where he proved himself an extremely knowledgeable and expert gardener, particularly in the early years of his settling there. Both artists evidently derived from a contact with the soil a refreshment and strengthening of the spiritual forces required for their creative work.

More important still was the modesty which characterized them both, and the dislike—in Manzoni's case it amounted to a horror—of self-display. This is a trait possessed in common which tells us a good deal about their attitude to their public and to their art. Both Manzoni and Verdi found themselves on occasion thrust by their fame into spheres for which they felt unsuited. Both were made senators of the Italian kingdom, and both preferred not to participate in affairs of government. Verdi declined to be present at the inauguration of a theatre in his honour. Manzoni had imposed upon himself a strict rule never to accept public honours of any kind; he refused the decoration of the Légion d' Honneur offered him in 1840, the Order of Merit offered him by Alexander Humboldt in 1844 in the name of the King of Prussia, the title of Commendatore offered him three times by Leopold II of Tuscany, and finally an honour offered him later in 1853 by his young admirer the Emperor of Brazil.

Manzoni's first real contact with Verdi's art must have been in

⁸ Luzio, *op. cit.*, letter of July 29th 1869.

1843 (long before they ever met), on the occasion of the opera 'I Lombardi'. For this opera Verdi used a libretto by Solera based on the epic poem 'I Lombardi alla prima crociata' by Tommaso Grossi. Grossi was an intimate friend of Manzoni's: he had actually taken up his abode with the Manzoni household in Via Morone at Milan, where he lived from 1822 until 1838, when he married and set up as a notary. Manzoni's novel and Grossi's epic were produced in very close relationship and were regarded by contemporaries as two equally important achievements. Ermès Visconti, for instance, writing on September 12th 1822, announces to Claude Fauriel:

Manzoni has reached the second volume of his novel and Grossi is half-way through an epic poem entitled 'I Lombardi alla prima crociata' which will consist of twelve cantos. If I had more room on this sheet of paper, I would add a few details about these two works which, each in its own kind, represent something quite new in Italy, and, in certain respects, in the whole of European literature.*

Manzoni's work was finished first and published in 1827. In a way that seems a little surprising he gave his friend's work a puff in anticipation of its forthcoming publication. In Chapter XI of 'I promessi sposi', comparing one of the villains to a wolf slinking down from the mountains to the plain in search of food, he quotes a line of poetry and adds:

If anyone wishes to know where this line comes from, it is taken from a stupendous work, unpublished, about crusades and Lombards, which will soon be brought out. The author and I are like brothers, and I am allowed to rummage among his manuscripts as I please.

Grossi, in his turn, confirmed the brotherly relationship when he published his own novel, 'Marco Visconti', which he dedicated to Manzoni, with the words "To Alessandro Manzoni, with the reverence of a disciple and the love of a brother".

Here, then, is a Verdi-Manzoni-Grossi triangle sketched between the lines of 'I promessi sposi'. Giuseppe Giusti, the Tuscan poet and satirist, outlined it still more plainly in his famous poem 'Sant' Ambrogio'. Here the triangle becomes a political symbol, and the political significance attributed to Manzoni's novel and to Verdi's music is made evident. Giusti addresses the Emperor of Austria in bantering tone:

I was at Sant' Ambrogio the other day, Your Excellency, that little out-of-the-way church in Milan. I had with me the younger son of a certain Sandro, author of a novel about two *promessi sposi*. But perhaps you've never read of it. Of course, you are busy, and have no time to read novels. . . .

* Carteggio, Sforza and Gallavresi, Vol. II, p. 54.

The church is full of Austrian soldiers, for whom he at first feels a great repugnance. A certain piece of music is being played, the chorus from Verdi's new opera, 'I Lombardi', the famous chorus "O Signore, dal tetto natio". Soon afterwards, the Austrians begin a German hymn. Suddenly the poet sees them as human beings, as less even, as cattle, driven from their homes in Croatia and Bohemia to spend the winter in Italy, slaves driven by the Austrians to keep Italians in slavery. In this poem Giusti gathers together several of the most important threads of Italian romanticism: Manzoni's novel, especially the emotional, almost symbolical significance many Italian patriots were beginning to attach to it; Verdi's opera, based on Grossi's epic, which had stirred such great emotion, particularly by the very chorus which Giusti quotes; and the romantic focus brought to bear upon the Austrian army, revealing them as individuals, victims themselves of tyranny.

The first meeting between Manzoni and Verdi did not take place until twenty-five years after the first performance of 'I Lombardi'. By 1867 Verdi's wife had already met Manzoni, through the Countess Maffei, who took her to visit him. On returning to Sant' Agata, Giuseppina wrote to the Countess to thank her and described Verdi's reaction to the news:

Wanting to break the news at once, I said with affected indifference:
"If you go to Milan, I will present you to Manzoni. He wants to meet you, and I was at his house the other day with the Countess".

The bombshell was so great and unexpected that I didn't know whether to open the carriage windows to give him more air, or close them in case he leapt out in a paroxysm of surprise and joy. He went red, pale, he perspired, he took off his hat and turned it round and round in his hands until it was nearly reduced to a limp rag. And more (but keep this between ourselves), the proud and fierce bear of Busseto had tears in his eyes, and both of us were so moved and overwhelmed that we were completely silent for ten minutes. Thank you very much again, dear, good Clarina, on Verdi's behalf and my own. From Sunday onwards, in this solitude, your name and the name of this saint of ours are repeated at every moment, and with what accompaniment of praise and affection I leave you to imagine.¹⁰

She adds that Verdi is now trying to write to Manzoni, and draws an amusing picture of him scratching his ear and pulling his moustache in embarrassment, not knowing how to begin. In fact, he gave up the attempt and wrote to the countess instead, saying how much he envied his wife and how much he would like to meet Manzoni himself. This is one of the most important and interesting of the letters concerning Manzoni, and it contains Verdi's opinion of 'I promessi sposi'. He calls it "not only the greatest book of

¹⁰ Luzio, *op. cit.*, letter dated May 1867.

our time, but one of the greatest books ever come forth from the human brain".

I was sixteen years old when I first read 'I promessi sposi'. Since then I have read many other works, and on re-reading them I have found with the passing of the years that I have modified or cancelled the opinion, even of works of great reputation, which I formed in my younger days; but for 'I promessi sposi' my enthusiasm is still the same; indeed, since I have come to know men better, it has become even greater. The fact is that this is a *true* book, as true as Truth itself. If only artists could understand once and for all what this *truth* is, there would no longer be musicians of the *future* or of the *past*; nor purist, realist, idealist painters; nor classical and romantic poets; but true poets, true painters, true musicians.¹¹

These words of Verdi's constitute a valuable clue to our understanding of the two artists. Verdi recognizes in Manzoni one who adheres to the same artistic ideals as himself, and his words on the subject of truth and art might well have come from Manzoni's own article on romanticism.¹²

The date of this letter was May 24th 1867. It had been preceded by various indirect communications between Verdi and Manzoni, the Countess Maffei acting as intermediary. She had obtained for Verdi a portrait of Manzoni, who had inscribed it with the words: "To Giuseppe Verdi, glory of Italy, a decrepit Lombard writer".

Verdi had replied to the countess saying that he counted the photograph among his most treasured possessions:

If you see him, thank him for his photograph, which, inscribed with his name, has become for me the most precious of things. Tell him how great are my love and respect for him; say that I esteem him and venerate him as greatly as it is possible to esteem and venerate anyone on this earth, both as a man and as a sublime and true glory of our ever-suffering country.¹³

Such were Verdi's feelings for Manzoni a year before they had ever met. The meeting took place on June 30th 1868, at the salon of the Countess Maffei in Milan. Verdi's emotions were recorded in a letter he wrote a week later to the hostess; in his words there now begins to be apparent the almost idolatrous veneration of which Luzio speaks:

What can I say of Manzoni? How can I express to you the new, indefinable, sweetest sensation produced in me by the presence of that saint, as you call him? I would have knelt before him, if men might be worshipped. They say that it is not allowed, and so be it, although we bow down before many who have neither the talent nor

¹¹ Luzio, *op. cit.*, letter dated May 24th 1867.

¹² 'Sul romanticismo: lettera al Marchese Cesare D'Azeglio.'

¹³ *Lett. cit.*

the virtues of Manzoni, and who have even been villains. When you see him, kiss his hand for me and tell him of my veneration.¹⁴

He confessed also to being tongue-tied and embarrassed in Manzoni's presence:

It is strange! Although I used to be very shy, I am so no longer; but in the presence of Manzoni, I feel so small (and note that I am as proud as Lucifer), that I am unable to speak a word, or hardly a word.

This veneration for Manzoni is of special interest in that it is Giuseppe Verdi who experienced it. In itself, however, it has nothing unusual about it, or even anything original. With Verdi the emotion was no doubt more intense than in the majority of cases; it was certainly more valuable and productive, since to it we owe the Requiem Mass. All that Verdi says about Manzoni is, however, perfectly characteristic of the veneration in which he was held during the latter part of his life, especially by the Milanese. I have many times referred to the Countess Maffei. She was a typical devotee of the Manzoni-worship, a veritable cult which dominated Milanese cultural and social life at that time. Her adoration of Manzoni undoubtedly formed part of her religion. She visited him every Sunday after mass; she noted down her conversations with him. She saw in him the realization upon earth of divine virtue and the thought that he might die filled her with dismay and perturbation. She was, moreover, a lady of great social influence. Her salon was the meeting-place of all notable literary and political personalities. She was therefore in a position to diffuse upon a wide circle of acquaintances from all over Italy and elsewhere the radiance of her worship of Manzoni. It is significant, and at the same time entirely representative of the usual course which the phenomenon followed, that she should have been the intermediary between Verdi and Manzoni, and that it was to her that Verdi expressed his feelings for the man whom they referred to unfailingly as "il nostro sant' uomo". Contessa Maffei was the priestess, her salon was the temple, of a new Milanese religion—Manzoni-worship.

Once Manzoni visited the countess; he had wished for some time to return her calls, but she had dissuaded him from giving himself the exertion of climbing her many stairs. On one occasion, however, he came, and from the ivy which shaded the room in which he sat, she plucked a quantity of leaves and, in commemoration of the event, she sent them to the intimates of her circle. One leaf went to Verdi's wife and from the date of the letter in which Giuseppina writes to thank the countess we know that the visit took place in June

¹⁴ Luzio, *op. cit.*, letter dated July 7th 1868.

1867. The countess had also requested the gift of a lock of Manzoni's hair, and part of this was also sent to Verdi's wife, together with the ivy leaf. The cult was acquiring a considerable degree of mysticism, as can be seen from the words in which Giuseppina replies: "The leaf of ivy and the hair of that venerable head, worthy to kiss the face of Christ, would have greatly moved me at any time."¹⁵ The gifts have moved her particularly at this present moment, when Baretti, Verdi's early protector and father of his first wife, is dying.

Subsequent letters from both Verdi and his wife to the countess show with what tenderness and dismay they followed the course of Manzoni's decline in health and the vicissitudes of his family. Manzoni's eldest son, Pietro, died on April 28th 1873, thirteen days only before his father's death. Manzoni was by this time enfeebled mentally and unaware of what had happened, although the funeral took place from his own house. Verdi wrote:

Poor Manzoni! His son dead, the support of the family, and that sublime mentality flickering out. What a fearful thought! Manzoni's mind spent. And providence? Oh, if there were a providence, do you think so many disasters would be heaped upon the head of that saint?¹⁶

In June of the same year, 1873, a hurried note from Verdi to the countess, informing her that he is in Milan and begging her to keep the news a secret, tells us that he has come to visit Manzoni's grave: "Where is our saint buried?"

Alessandro Manzoni was, then, the object of a religious cult; and of this cult the Requiem Mass might be said to be the hymn or anthem. It also represents the culminating expression of a profound emotion which had pervaded Verdi's mind for a long period. Perhaps the earliest indication that such a work might be forthcoming is to be seen in yet another of his letters to the Countess Maffei, dated November 11th 1869, in which he tells her of the failure of the project of the Requiem Mass for Rossini. The letter ends, rather interestingly, with a salutation to Manzoni: "When you return, kiss the hands of our great man for me."

Manzoni was then eighty-four. It is not impossible that the origin of the intention to write a Requiem for him can be traced to this letter, or at least to this period, the moment of the failure of the Rossini project. In this case the association of the two names of Rossini and Manzoni in this letter from Verdi is perhaps the earliest hint of the intention.

The first performance of the Requiem Mass, on May 22nd 1874, the anniversary of the death of Manzoni, in the Church of San

¹⁵ Luzio, *op. cit.*, letter dated June 25th 1867.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, letter written at end of April or beginning of May 1873.

VERDI AND MANZONI : ATTEMPTED EXPLANATION 43

Marco at Milan, was an occasion of cosmopolitan importance in the history of music. It was also an occasion of very great significance for Italian literature, and for Italian romanticism in all its manifestations. The mass gave expression to a multiplicity of contemporary Italian emotions, religious, patriotic, literary, as well as musical. Manzoni's death is very far from being an "occasion" for the composition of this mass. The work is the artistic expression by a man of genius of an important and widespread emotion, of which he was himself a principal participant.

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FOUR UNPUBLISHED VERDI LETTERS

By FRANK WALKER

THE library of the Paris Opéra possesses Verdi's letters to his French publisher Léon Escudier. A generous selection from them was published by J.-G. Prod'homme in the 'Rivista Musicale Italiana' for 1928 (March, June and December) in the original language—in so far as this was decipherable by Prod'homme; for, as Alessandro Luzio has pointed out with some asperity, this publication contains a large number of rather wild guesses. Among these letters are two addressed to Léon Escudier's brother Marie. The Escudier brothers were musical journalists, translators, editors of magazines and music publishers. Their long connection with Verdi, which lasted for more than thirty years, began in the 1840s, some time after 'Nabucco' had carried the composer's name beyond the borders of his own country. Verdi's letters to Léon Escudier continue from these early years up to 1877, but those to Marie become infrequent after about 1860, when the brothers quarrelled and parted company. It would seem that Léon retained all his Verdi correspondence and that the letters were kept all together until they found their way to the library of the Opéra, while those to Marie were sold or otherwise dispersed, and are found scattered in various collections. The following list gives all the known letters to Marie Escudier, as well as two which might have been addressed to either of the brothers. The fact that the latter are found in private collections, rather than in the library of the Opéra, suggests that they are, in fact, letters to Marie rather than Léon.

September 2nd 1845. Reprinted in the appendix to the 'Copialettere' (p. 439) from 'Per la storia' by A. M. Cornelio (Pistoia, 1904). Addressed "all' impresario Escudier", without Christian name or initial. Cornelio acknowledges his indebtedness to the Contessa Giuseppina Negroni and to Cav. Ercole Gnechi for the letters he prints.

October 23rd 1846. *Résumé* in 'Lettres de Musiciens écrites en français du XV^e au XX^e siècle', Vol. II (Paris-Turin, 1936), by Julien Tiersot.

November 29th 1850. Published by Alessandro Luzio in 'Carteggi Verdiani', Vol. II (Rome, 1935). Original in the Prussian State Library, Berlin.

April 15th 1851. *Résumé* in Tiersot, *op. cit.*
February 18th 1856. 'Copialettere', p. 186.

March 22nd 1861. *Résumé* in Tiersot, *op. cit.* It is not made clear whether this letter is to Marie or Léon Escudier. It is the reply to the letter of one of the brothers in the 'Carteggi Verdiani', Vol. II, p. 191.

June 2nd 1863. Published by Prod'homme, 'Rivista Musicale Italiana', June 1928.

June 11th (16th?) 1874. Published by Prod'homme, 'Rivista Musicale Italiana', December 1928.

To these may now be added four hitherto unpublished letters in the autograph collection of Andrew Kurtz, of Wavertree, Liverpool, bequeathed to the British Museum in 1891 (Add. MS. 33,965).

Milan, January 12th 1847.

Dear Friend,

Please forgive my tardiness in replying to your most kind letter. Put it down a little to my laziness and a little to my tasks, which really are pressing. I am most obliged to you for the news given me of 'I due Foscari' and 'Roberto Bruce'. About the latter I have seen an article by Berlioz in the 'Débats' which is extremely discouraging to all those who may have had the intention of writing for the Opéra.

As for the opera to be written for the Italian Theatre, Mario has also written me about it, but I cannot accept. I cannot make new contracts until I have fulfilled the old ones: you cannot imagine how they weigh upon me, and I can't see when I shall be delivered of them. Very soon indeed 'Macbeth' will be finished and thus I shall have one opera the less on my shoulders. For London I have fixed on 'I masnadieri', the libretto of which is already finished. It seems to me effective as regards the situations and versified excellently throughout by one of the most illustrious Italian poets.¹

So we shall see each other soon on going to London? I can't say when I shall be able to hear with my own ears a performance at the Opéra. If you know anything positive as to whether Meyerbeer is going to London please let me know.

Our theatre, la Scala, is doing excellently. The other evening there was the ballet with Elssler. It was an absolute success for Elssler and Perrot. The singers please, so here the spectacle will be complete. To tell the truth it's a singing company to whom it is necessary to raise one's hat, both for power and beauty of voice and for its manner of singing—simple, without caricature and affectation. On Saturday 'Alzira' will be put on. Farewell, farewell. Let me have news of you frequently and believe me,

Your affectionate friend,

G. VERDI.

Busseto, April 6th 1850.

Dear Escudier,

A few lines in reply to your dear letter of the 23rd of last month, and to repeat my thanks for the interest you take in my affairs.

¹ Andrea Maffei.

I have not received Roqueplan's letter, and the situation between me and the Opéra is such that I must not proffer word unless a direct and formal offer is made to me. Don't be offended therefore if for the present I say nothing further.

You know that although many theatres are offered me, I should consider it an honour to write for the Opéra, but I should renounce that honour unless I received a direct invitation. So let us allow matters to take their course.

From your same letter I gather that it is not Roqueplan who shows *le désir de réparer l'ingratitude*, but rather the deference of the poet, to whom I am most grateful. For the rest, one of two things—either the Opéra will *positively* make use of me and will offer me a contract on suitable and clear conditions, knowing those that please me, or the Opéra does not wish to employ me, and then it is useless to anticipate anything on this subject.

Nothing further because the post is leaving and I wished to answer by return. Give a kiss to your little nephews. A thousand good wishes to Léon and to Laura, and believe me always,

Your

G. VERDI.

Busseto, September 30th 1851.

Dear Escudier,

I have replied to Mapet about the Madrid business, which will certainly not come off, as Mapet himself will tell you.

I am glad to hear from your last letter about the marvels of London, about its festivities, its shows, its theatres, its artists, with their respective successes (of course). Let us hope that the Paris theatrical season now beginning will be equally brilliant, in spite of the fact that you still have the old tenors, the basses, the baritones and double basses, &c., also two new *prime donne*. It's not much, but it's something! And will Barbieri please? (Oh, I am very curious! and curiosity in me is almost absurd, in me, who am confined in this corner I don't know whether within or without the terraqueous globe!) If it suits Lumley he must let her make her début in 'Lucrezia Borgia'.

And will Hiller conduct well? To be sure, he has been in Italy, but twelve or fifteen years ago, so does not know any of our recent operas, nor anything about the way we perform them, for, whether you like it or not, in Italy they are performed differently from the way they are performed with you. I don't know whether it is a better or a worse way, but I repeat—differently. Then as for the . . . You understand!—These big names, these directors of conservatories, of lyceums, hurl anathema against a fifth or an octave, or against a tune that is (imagine!) *popular*. It's a great crime to turn out popular tunes!

Finally, for Italian music (observe this eccentricity!) I should like Italian names [*i.e.* singers].

Let all that be said without importance, as it were *en passant*, because I shall be content in any case, as much with the fiascos (God deliver us from them!) as with the successes of the Italian Theatre in Paris.

The devil! Have I written you two pages about music? I who occupy myself and care so little about it? So be it! It's done! I am not now in a position *not* to write them. If there were room I should put at the beginning that you should skip straightaway these two unfortunate pages and come to these last lines in which I wish that you may enjoy yourself and keep well, with Léon and all his family, and believe me,

Your affectionate
G. VERDI.

Busseto, June 17th 1856.

Dear Marie,

Heaven grant that the Opéra has at last found its prima donna—lacking for so long; it would be real good fortune. If the success of Mme. Moreau has continued, and more, if it can continue on another occasion, then the management of the Opéra has reason to hope. I wish it for the good of everyone and I wish it from my heart. At the same time, good for us (that is to say for me and Léon) if 'I vespri' have reappeared on the bills.

I believe you are joking saying that M. Crosnier awaits either my arrival or an answer. In the last letter which I wrote him (about two months ago) I indicated the conditions on which it would have been possible for me to come to Paris. I told him that if the conditions suited him he should reply by return of post; in the contrary case if I did not receive a reply the negotiations were broken off. M. Crosnier has not replied to me and consequently the negotiations are over.

To-morrow I leave with Peppina for Venice, where I shall stay a month to take the baths. Please direct your letters there and tell your brother the same thing.

Farewell, farewell, and believe me,

Your affectionate
G. VERDI.

MELODIC PATTERNS IN BACH'S COUNTERPOINT

BY PETER PLATT

IN his book 'Contrapuntal Technique in the Sixteenth Century' Dr. R. O. Morris remarks on the fondness of the English school for clashes made possible by the use of *musica ficta* (for instance a B \flat in a descending part sounding against a B \natural in an ascending one), and in connection with this tendency he writes: "To us to-day it seems a perfectly natural proceeding; it is merely honouring the claims of the intellect in preference to those of the senses—a sacrifice which a composer of the highest order must always be ready to make."

It can be argued that the ear, in listening to music, hears "vertically", however contrapuntal the texture may be: that is to say, what the ear hears is a synthesis of the various parts; in fact, harmony. The intellect on the other hand can go beyond this and, provided that the general harmonic basis is clear, can tolerate a great deal of liberty of detail (from a harmonic point of view) in the individual parts and can to some extent perceive music "horizontally" as well as "vertically".

The quotation from Dr. Morris's book sums up a process which is constantly taking place in all music, and particularly in music of a contrapuntal nature: the ear can be made to accept clashes and small lapses from the normal conventions of harmonic grammar that would otherwise offend it, provided that the intellect can accept the individual conduct of the clashing parts as logical and inevitable and related to a sound harmonic "scaffolding". Bach is thoroughly aware of this process; passages constantly occur in his music which appear undisciplined or even ugly on paper or apart from their context, but sound perfectly satisfying in performance.

One of Bach's most important allies in thus "honouring the claims of the intellect in preference to those of the senses" is what may be called the "accepted" melodic figure. In Byrd's time the hearer was accustomed by long experience to the idiosyncrasies of *musica ficta* and found it possible to accept and enjoy two parts each of which followed different usages of the conventions simultaneously, in spite of momentary harmonic incongruity; similarly, in Bach's day certain groups of notes embellishing a single note or a chord

had been used so often that they had come to be accepted as "patterns" or "figures", and Bach was able to use these patterns not as groups of separate notes, but as entities standing in place of the note or chord they represent. These "entities" from their very nature carry with them their own harmonic implications, and incidental clashes between the notes comprising them and other parts may be disregarded provided that these implications are clear.

Bach was by no means the first composer to treat the conventional figure in this way. Many of Purcell's clashes are brought about because he too will treat a figure as an entity whose implied harmony is clear and will permit clashes to occur between figure and harmony-note or between unessential notes of two figures, provided that the whole is logically satisfying. The same treatment may be observed in the music of Schütz, and even Palestrina in at least one instance (quoted by Dr. Morris) seems to regard the sixteenth-century *nota cambiata* in this light. But it is in Bach's music that figuration plays such a consistently important part, and it is he who has developed most highly this particular use of the accepted melodic figure as an entity with a significance of its own.¹

To turn to Bach's music, the first examples show various methods of procedure adopted by him in connection with conventional figures of a more or less simple type and illustrate his method of regarding these figures as entities standing in place of a note or chord.

Ex. 1
Bourrée from 6th French Suite



Ex. 1 shows the use of a changing-note formula against other patterns. The groups of changing-notes are taken as being embellishments of single notes. The first (in the treble) is taken as an E, the second (in the bass) as an A#, &c.

¹ In general text-books on the subject of Bach's counterpoint disregard this aspect of the melodic figure. In Kitson's 'Contrapuntal Harmony for Beginners', for instance, the various combinations of unessential and harmony-notes are examined, exhaustively enough, in detail (from the point of view of the ear as opposed to the intellect, so to speak), but no allowance is made for the fact that figures may be perceived as a whole, and against another part. Indeed Dr. Morris's book 'An Introduction to Counterpoint' seems to be the first in which the importance of figures perceived in this way is recognized and in which examples of them are given.

Ex. 2
2-pt. Invention No. 7, in E minor



In this passage the A in the bass is decorated by one figure while its seventh in the treble is decorated by another—three surprising clashes occur.

Ex. 3
2-pt. Invention No. 1, in C major



Ex. 3 is another simple case in which a clash occurs between a harmony-note and an unessential one in a conventional figure (a). (This dissonance of the third against the fourth degree of the scale is strictly forbidden by Kitson.)

Ex. 4
Allemande from 1st French Suite



Here a clash occurs between the second (and unessential) note of a figure (b) and an ornamenteally resolved suspension.

Ex. 5
2-pt. Invention No. 11, in G minor



Ex. 5 contains another clash of two easily grasped figures which would be eschewed by text-books. It is given added point by the two clashing parts consisting of the subject of the Invention and an inversion of its countersubject.

These five passages all sound perfectly acceptable in spite of their apparent "bad grammar" because the figures used are all characteristic of a contrapuntal tradition to which we are accustomed; and, because of this familiarity, their harmonic implications are clearly comprehensible and their destinations assured. The mind is forced to accept the logic of the music, and like Byrd's audience (or congregation) we find ourselves listening to more than one independent part simultaneously without regard to momentary vertical conflict between them.

Some interesting progressions occur when, instead of one note, all three notes of a triad are embellished with figures:

Ex. 6
St. Matthew Passion, Part II, No. I



Here the triad on the leading-note of E minor is decorated with passing and changing notes which make curious-sounding new chords, and in the following instance the decorations of the chord of G minor in the first bar and G major in the second give rise to some astounding dissonances, and create at first the impression that Bach is writing in two keys at once:

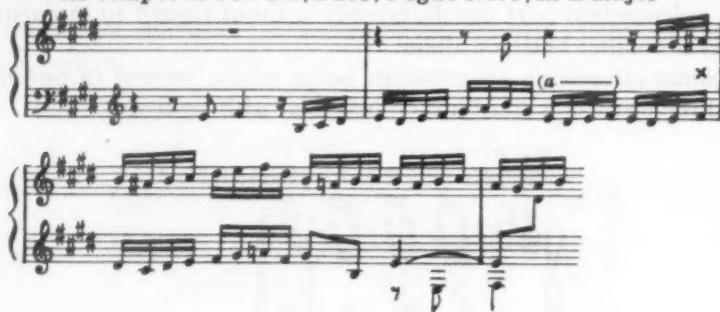
Ex. 7
1st Brandenburg Concerto. 2nd Movement



A very large number indeed of the minor liberties that Bach takes in his counterpoint can be related to the above procedure, but there are many apparently more flagrant departures from the accepted rules which cannot always be explained by the fact that the figures involved are of a commonplace nature. In these cases, however, it will be frequently found that figuration actually is involved and that it is the logical "working-out" of a figure that has already played an important part in the piece which is responsible

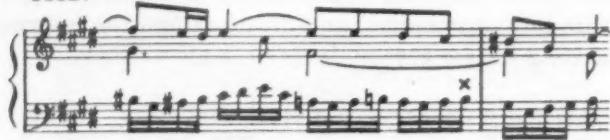
for these departures. When this is so, Bach will generally treat the figure in orthodox manner at first, while it is still unfamiliar to us, until by degrees we become accustomed to it, and by the time he wishes to use it in an unconventional way it has acquired all the force of the "accepted figure" discussed above:

Ex. 8
Well-tempered Clavier, Bk. 1, Fugue No. 9, in E major



The figure (a) is a very prominent one and, as will be seen from the quotation, Bach is at first careful, when it is quitted by leap, to treat the two final notes of the semiquaver group as harmony-notes. This procedure is continued until bar 11 when the following occurs:

Ex. 9
Ibid.



Here the note leapt from is no longer a harmony-note. Bach realizes that by this time we will be able to regard the whole group as a decoration of a single note (in this case an A).

It will be seen that in this example, as in the previous ones, Bach treats the figure under discussion as an entity. The difference between this and the other examples is that here a grammatical abnormality (though admittedly a slight one) rather than a clash is involved. In the following illustrations we are again (as in Ex. 9) made acquainted with the figure and its normal treatment before Bach allows it to take the law into its own hands; but the most important feature in them is, not that our familiarity with the figure allows Bach to treat it as a "substitute" doing the job of a note or chord, but that, by virtue of our association of it with previous passages in the music, he can, when the occasion demands, dispense

with the usual conventions of *harmonic grammar* and adopt any line of action which he considers appropriate *contrapuntally*.

Ex. 10
Sarabande from 1st French Suite



In this quotation from the Sarabande of the 1st French Suite a leap from a passing-note is again involved (as it was in Ex. 9). The figure has been heard before (twice) and has up to the seventeenth bar, where this occurs, been treated in orthodox manner, thus:

Ex. 11
Ibid. (opening bars)



The following is an instance of "doubtful grammar" being disregarded in order to keep a significant and continually employed figure going:

Ex. 12
Allemande from 3rd French Suite



The second half of the figure (marked [a]) is regarded as an anticipation of the E, and at (b) there is an unresolved suspension (or if the subsequent D can be counted as its resolution, it is a very late one indeed). Evidently Bach considered the stricter imitation of the figure more desirable than the strict resolution of the suspension.

The following is a curious instance of a descending pattern which starts at the top as a perfectly normal decorative figure (of F, then of E) and seems to lose its way as it comes down:

Ex. 13

Italian Concerto, 2nd movement



A daring and beautiful use of a figure contrapuntally apt, though apparently at first sight harmonically awkward, is to be found in the Courante of the 1st French Suite, one of whose most prominent figures is the opening one:

Ex. 14

Courante from 1st French Suite



These rather surprising bars come from the end of the second half:

Ex. 15

Ibid.



The basic harmony at (x) is an A which remains as a suspension during the second beat and finally resolves on to a G, but the A is decorated with the figure quoted in Ex. 14, which is repeated immediately in stretto two octaves and a semitone higher with most beautiful effect.

Even more extraordinary is the metamorphosis an appoggiatura

figure undergoes in the chorale prelude 'Vater unser im Himmelreich' ('Klavierübung' Bk. 3). It is at first treated normally:

Ex. 16
Canon: Vater unser im Himmelreich



the short note being the appoggiatura and the long one the harmony-note. After a while the positions are reversed, and the short note appears to be treated as the harmony-note:

Ex. 17
Ibid.



Later still, with the help of a little "contrary motion", the most surprising things happen:

Ex. 18
Ibid.



In every one of the illustrations quoted force of association is an essential element in giving the figures involved their significance. In the first group of examples we can readily recognize these figures as well known and often used; in Exs. 8-18 the shock of any grammatical liberty taken is mitigated by our association of the figures in question with similar ones heard before in the piece. As a concluding example, here is a passage in which power of association plays the most important part, the melodic pattern being of so much longer duration than usual that it can hardly be regarded as a "figure" at all.

The passage occurs in the E major three-part Invention. The theme of the Invention, heard many times in the course of it, is played against its inversion (also heard several times before).

Ex. 19
3-pt. Invention in E major

It is interesting to observe that with the exception of the first notes (and the bare fifths which, in spite of their theoretical consonance, are too harsh to be considered entirely satisfying in themselves) there is only one consonance among all nine notes (the D \sharp and F \sharp), and that is obscured by the sustained G \sharp below. Admittedly the passage might be explained in theory by the rules of contrary motion (if the "twists" in the last group of quavers can be disregarded), but it cannot be denied that it loses its significance entirely when played out of its context and without its associations with the theme and its inversion. Bach is very fond of this device of playing a theme against its inversion.

Bach's masterly exploitation of the possibilities of the melodic figure, then, leads to surprising and important results. Clashes which in detail seem ugly or pointless on paper become natural and convincing in performance; apparent lapses of grammar when the counterpoint demands them are not only acceptable but are extremely effective. In short the process is, in Dr. Morris's words, an honouring of the claims of the intellect in preference to those of the senses. It may be said of all the illustrations given that the music is logically irreproachable—one might almost say inevitable. Bach here breaks away from the trammels of contemporary harmonic propriety and pursues counterpoint for its own sake—he forces us to listen "horizontally" instead of allowing us merely to accept the harmonic synthesis of the parts. This is by far the most important and most striking result of all, and though it would be wrong to suppose that every extension of contrapuntal technique in Bach's music can be related to his particular attitude to the employment of the melodic pattern, it is certain that figure and pattern used in the ways here described play a part of the first importance in his music and afford a valuable clue to the less easily explained intricacies of his magnificent contrapuntal technique.

THE FUNCTIONAL DYNAMICS OF MUSIC

BY RICHARD FREYmann

THE approach to the study of the nature of music must start with its origins. But

Scores of philosophers, economists and scientists have in the last two hundred years attempted to get to the truth, and yet have not been able to present as much as one acceptable theory, indeed, one uncontested fact. . . . Music . . . eludes whatever attempt may be made to find any simple solution.¹

To come nearer to the root of the matter I propose to employ methods developed by the various schools of dynamic psychology and functional anthropology. Both these sciences have contributed greatly to our present deeper and more intimate knowledge of the early history of mankind. In particular conative psychology, by its emphasis on goal-seeking activities, has thrown much new light on the functions of human behaviour.

The functional view of culture lays down the principle that in any type of civilization, every custom, material object, idea and belief fulfils some vital function, has some task to accomplish, represents an indispensable part within a working whole.

The better a custom is understood, the clearer it becomes that it does not sit loosely, within its context, that it is not a simple detachable unit like a petrifact in a rock, but that it is organically connected with the rest of the culture.²

Thus the origins of music must be looked for in a complex of functions: of functions integrated with those of other modes of behaviour in the early development of man. Above all, the "vital function", which has "some task to accomplish", is, I believe, the function of need-fulfilment, wherein the need itself may be either a simple or complex conative tendency. In this respect I have myself applied the methods of conative psychology to a recent questionnaire on the reasons for listening to music and thus, I think, obtained some useful information regarding the various functions of music to-day; these, in turn, throw light on the origins of music and the reactions of listeners to music in past ages.³

The earliest human beings lived in small groups. Their cerebral capacity was smaller than that of modern man, and their mode of

¹ Curt Sachs, 'The Rise of Music in the Ancient World' (London, 1944), p. 1.

² B. Malinowsky, 'Social Anthropology', Encyc. Brit., 14th Ed., Vol. xx, p. 862*f.*

³ 'The Reasons for Listening to Music', Results of a questionnaire (not published), 1944-46.

behaviour was of a more or less simple reflex type. Language as an expression of ideas, and even more as a means of conscious communication, was still in an embryonic state. Their ability to differentiate the colours and sounds and other shades of stimuli reaching them from the outside world remained for a long time very limited. The English psychologist Ward described this state as one of "undifferentiated continuum":

Working backwards from this [the continuity of the conscious] as we find it now, we are led alike by particular facts and general considerations to the conception of a totum objectivum or objective continuum which is gradually differentiated, therefore giving rise to what we call distinct presentations. . . . Experience advances as this continuum is differentiated. . . . Differentiation implies that the simple becomes complex or the complex more complex. It implies also that this increased complexity is due to the persistence of former changes.⁴

Because of the relative simplicity, both physiologically and socially, of man at the dawn of human history it will be easier to investigate by a study of early human groups the qualities and functions of music that have determined its development throughout the ages down to the present day.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FEAR

Let us for a moment forget all the refinements of music (instrumental and vocal, religious and escapist, and so on) and focus all our attention on the earliest possible phases of its beginnings as a power in human life. The factor in music that would then most clearly stand out would be its inter-relation with our emotional life. It is from this starting-point that our way leads through the darkness pervading the origins of music.

Although endowed with a variety of feelings, such as love, anger, hunger, curiosity, to meet the varying needs of life, the higher animals, including man, are stirred most often and in the most powerful way by the emotion of fear. Even in modern times fear, veiled as a sense of insecurity or anxiety, dominates our lives. The early races of men were feeble in strength, mental ability and social organization; they had to fight a hostile world, a world of ferocious beasts of prey, for sheer survival of the species, and the chances were scarcely more than even:

The rarity of human fossils does justify the conclusion that during the first millenium or so of their existence 'men' were rare animals.⁵

⁴ J. Ward, 'Psychology', Encyc. Brit., 11th Ed., Vol. XXII, p. 555.

⁵ G. Childe, 'What happened in History' (Pelican Books, 1946), p. 27.

How much more, therefore, among early men must fear have been the over-riding emotion, the ever-present stimulus that roused both individuals and communities to necessary acts of self-preservation.

In our search for the origin of music one source of fear stands out: noise. Now the identification of noise with music may shock many readers, who may hold that music starts where noise ends—that is where irregular wave-movements become regular ones. That is true so far as it goes, but the

classification that musical sounds are those which are smooth, regular, pleasant and of definite pitch, and unmusical sounds are rough, irregular, unpleasant and of no definite pitch is only approximate at the best. . . . Many sounds which pass as noises have associated musical notes, and almost all musical notes have associated noises which we deliberately ignore in order that we may concentrate our attention on the note. . . .⁶

Again:

Noise is a term which used to be applied very much in the sense of unmusical as we have defined it in Chapter I . . . (*see* previous quotation). It has now been defined by international agreement as "sound" which is undesired by the recipient. This is a distressingly subjective definition.⁷

It is, in my view, this misconception that the study of music must concern only musical sounds that has made past inquiries into the origins of music give us so hazy a picture.

THE TWO SENSE-ORGANS OF THE EAR

It is now necessary to examine the connection between noise and the emotional state of fear caused by it. This is well described by R. T. Beatty:

Thus when a faint sound reaches a quietly feeding hare the ears twitch, the head is raised, and the eyes turn towards the source of sound. A louder sound causes the protective muscles of the middle ear to contract and in addition the animal gives a convulsive spring, which is the precursor of flight. These actions originate in the lower brain centres, and are precautionary steps which put the hare without loss of time in an advantageous position even before its conscious faculties have begun to deal with the situation. . . . Man does not start or cower or take flight at unaccustomed sounds; instead he follows the more complicated dictates of his cortical processes, and his reactions are delayed and infused with judgement. Only in exceptional cases, as when a motor-horn sounds at a distance of a few paces, does the inferior colliculus take charge and contrive a spasmodic and possibly life-saving leap. . . . The volume of the inferior colliculus which shows a progressive decrease in passing

⁶ A. Wood, 'The Physics of Music' (London, 1945), p. 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

from the lower to the higher apes, is still further reduced in the human brain. . . . It is only in young children, whose minds have not yet received the impress of experience, that one may except the primary reflex actions to occur in simple and predictable fashion. . . . Only three things have been found to evoke the reaction of fear in a baby: withdrawal of a supporting hand, pinioning of its arms to its sides, or a loud and sudden noise cause facial contortions, crying and, at the age of a few months, attempts to crawl away. It is in the last-mentioned stimulus that we are at present concerned. . . .⁸

Putting all these facts together, we have good grounds for basing the effects of noise on the reactions of fear, and there is little difficulty in seeing how this activity has been inherited from our early ancestors, who in their turn may have received it from a still more remote pre-human era.

A vision of the Stone Age rises before us. A wet southerly wind has blown up at nightfall, and somewhere on the grassy plains a palaeolithic family is making the best of an encampment in the open. The oldest and strongest male is keeping solitary watch. The day's hunting has been long and fruitless, and he is hungry and tired as he peers anxiously northward, where danger may be afoot, stealing upwind through the darkness.

But when the silence is shattered by a monstrous roar the sentinel becomes a man transformed. Hunger and fatigue are instantly forgotten, the hair of his body bristles (to this day we have the feeling of goose flesh in moments of terror), his heart begins to race, his breath comes fast. No doubt he is unconscious of these changes which are taking place within him. . . . In those moments our ancestor is living at many times his normal rate. . . .⁹

It may be helpful to recall briefly the physiology of hearing. The essential organ is the inner ear, aptly called the labyrinth from its complex construction. It holds the receiving organ of sound, the cochlea, that analyses tones and pitches and transmits them by nerve-fibres to the brain. Intimately joined to the cochlea within the labyrinth is the organ controlling posture and movement, the saccule. Now in evolution the saccule came first. From it developed the cochlea, which is absent in lowly forms of life, but shows a progressive development from fishes to mammalia. The two organs are separated only by a highly sensitive membrane and still share a common nerve bundle to the brain:

When we come to fill in the actual details of the auditory nerve system the picture becomes complicated. . . . One source of confusion is due to the fact that the auditory nerves from the cochlea are joined at an early stage by fibres from the otholith organ of the saccule, whose function is that of controlling posture; so that in following the course of the composite nerve bundle it is difficult to refer the various sets of fibres to their proper origins.¹⁰

⁸ R. T. Beatty, 'Hearing in Man and Animals' (London, 1932), p. 149.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 186f.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

I venture to suggest that these two organs, so intimately joined, still affect one another; that the receipt of sound stimulates via the saccule reflex body movements:

Each sound wave as it passes through . . . [the cochlea] . . . generates an electrical wave which spreads through the adjacent tissues [the saccule]¹¹.

Thus in the above examples the startled hare progressively twitches, springs and flees, the motor-horn-startled man leaps and the baby attempts to crawl away.

I offer this theory somewhat tentatively, but I am convinced that further research will establish the intimate relationship between the stimuli of sound and the reflex reaction of movement operating via the labyrinth of the inner ear. It is true, of course, that in the evolution of man the lower (reflex) brain-centres diminished in volume, but they are still an active principle. In pre-man and his antecedents these brain-centres were larger, and the differentiation of function of the cochlea and the saccule from which it evolved less marked. Moreover, research in physiology tends more and more to discover that approximate organs are inter-related in their activities—for example the nose by smelling helps to select edible food for the mouth and stimulates the flow of saliva.

If my theory is correct a new factor in the development of man's reactions to sound, and therefore of the genesis of music, is brought to light: the impulse to bodily movement instigated by the stimulus of sound. Hence the intimate association of dancing and music. I shall return to this point later.

Fear in primitive man was, of course, roused by other stimuli than noise—for example by visual awareness of moving objects in the primeval forest. But whether stimulated by sound or vision, or by a combination of both, the reactions of the frightened man would on every occasion be the same: a heightened state of nervous excitement, accompanied by somatic and glandular changes and followed by gestures and movements. The human voice would also be affected:

Speech, for example, depends on the vocal chords, which are operated by the respiratory movement functioning in this connection as a bellow supplying the air. Emotion may disturb this function. There may be an involuntary rising of the voice or a catch in the voice; and there may be an alternation of the regular breathing movements.¹²

In other words a state of emotion is apt to alter the character of vocal expressions of which speech is one specimen.

¹¹ R. S. Woodworth, 'Experimental Psychology' (New York, 1938), p. 534.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 258.

Thus need-fulfilments are again shown to be the driving forces that lead to action. If other emotional states, such as anger, hunger or sexual desire, are roused, the result is the same: in every case, as with fear, there follow reflex movements designed to achieve the desired end—with these emotions, however, movements *towards* the stimulating object, whether enemy, food or sexual partner. Vocal ejaculations would often accompany such movements, but they appear rather as by-products of the main activities. In time, however, through the need for co-operation in defence and hunting for food, vocal sounds crystallized into significant words and thus obtained a new and independent importance.

THE NEED FOR SPEECH

But for a long time, because of the closer integration of the organs of hearing and posture, early man was hardly aware of any clear-cut difference between speech or ejaculation and gesture. Together they composed a single complex of reaction patterns:

Primitive speech was originally simple reflexes, which were later manifested as association reflexes in the form of ejaculations; but in time in the course of evolution, these reflexes, through differentiation and associative generalizations changed into those complex movements which we call inarticulate speech.¹³

At progressive stages of man's intellectual growth he detected, first, that sound was produced by himself in states of emotional excitement; secondly, that by producing sound he could exert a certain limited power over his most dangerous enemies, animal or human; and, thirdly, that he could convey his desires to other members of his species by vocal sounds without the aid of visually observable gestures. S. S. R. Paget advances the interesting view that what drove man to the invention of speech

was not so much the need of expressing his thought (for that might have been done quite satisfactorily by bodily gesture) as the difficulty of "talking with his hands full". It was the continual use of man's hands for craftsmanship, the chase and the beginnings of art and culture, that drove him to find other methods of expressing his ideas, namely by a specialized pantomime of the tongue and lips.¹⁴

And whispered or voiced gestures enabled the mouth pantomime to be recognized by ear, so that for the first time man was able to impart information in the dark, or when he was out of sight of the person with whom he wished to communicate.¹⁵

Thus a particular phase in the general social and cultural

¹³ V. M. Bechterevev, 'General Principles of Human Reflexology' (London, 1922), p. 248.

¹⁴ S. R. Paget, 'Human Speech' (London, 1932), p. 132.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

development of human society created needs for vocal expression of human desires and wishes. These needs could be satisfied because man possessed a larynx and mouth-structure capable of producing articulate sounds—vowels, consonants and finally words.

When the vocal sound-component of the primitive emotional reflex actions had thus attained its speech function, vocal exclamations must have been deprived of some originality and primacy of importance because of the lack of emotional content in purely communicative speech. But there were counteracting tendencies. Research has shown that the number of words available in primitive speech was small. A spoken "gesture" must therefore have had a much greater impact on other members of a group, and its functional content must have been much more obvious. We should remember that in modern times the use of written language has undermined much of its force:

A statement spoken in real life is never detached from the situation in which it has been uttered. For each verbal statement by a human being has the aim and the function of expressing thought or feeling actual at that moment and in that situation, and necessary for some reason or other to be made known to another person or persons, in order either to serve purposes of common action or to establish ties of purely social, communion, or else to deliver the speaker of violent feelings or passions.¹⁶

Each word or ejaculation in early times must therefore have carried far greater significance and possessed a far larger content of reality than most of the words that we use in our present-day intercourse.

MUSIC

Nevertheless vocal expressions, by becoming instruments of communication, must have suffered some loss of force. But just as a river dammed up by its silt will find a way by new channels to the sea, so we can imagine that the primordial emotional content of vocal sounds must have demanded some outlet. In course of time man accentuated, increased and amplified the emotional tone of his primitive vocal expressions in quite a different direction, namely for functional purposes of more profound and universal nature, such as those of religion, myths and magical rites.

At this stage must have arisen imperceptibly the earliest forms of vocal music. For we may suppose that early man, employing this new and powerful means of expressing his strongest emotions would, when excited, heighten the effect of his vocal expressions by modifications such as alteration of pitch or intensity, repetition, or even

¹⁶ B. Malinowski, 'The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Language', in 'The Meaning of Meaning' (Ogden, etc.), (London, 1933), p. 307.

melodies, that he found impressed his fellow-men. Even to-day we are inclined to emphasize the importance of an utterance by repeating it, shouting it or changing its resonance quality.

Poets disfigure and level the logical accents obligatory to making ourselves understood in talk between man and man; they replace the free, expressive rhythm of spoken phrases by stereotype patterns of long and short or strong and light; they supplant the natural flow of speech by artificial arrangements of words that often wrong the rules of grammar and syntax; they even replace common by uncommon words that none would use in ordinary speech. Art denaturalizes nature in order to raise it to a higher, or at least a different "plane".¹⁷

Thus in the breach between "communicative" speech and sounds of affective reaction lay the genesis of music. Its further development lay in the conscious differentiation of communicative and emotional vocal expressions which however must have taken a very long time for early man to attain. But from the moment that certain vocal sound patterns—patterns of varied pitch, intensity, repetition and so on—were consciously produced and repeated because they invested emotional "speech" with additional force, the earliest musical forms had come into being. Vocal music—the origin of all music as we properly understand it—thus owes its very existence to the growth of speech from which it developed.

This great advance derived, after a long time, further impetus from the invention of mechanical devices such as the drum, trumpet and hollow log, used perhaps first for signalling and later for magical purposes. The way was thus prepared for instrumental music which, however, arrived much later in history than vocal music.

NATURAL SELECTION AND MUSIC

Darwin ranked music as an important factor in natural selection in the human species, drawing parallels to the special calls or "melodies" of birds and other animals during the mating-season. The examples are too numerous and too well known to be repeated here. Modern anthropological studies have found some evidence that music may in fact play a part in the selection of mates among human beings, but it was not until mankind had advanced beyond the most primitive stages that this function developed independently.

The content of songs in their rudimentary stages was confined within the narrow limitations of a low cultural and social development. Their function for the time being was primarily and predominantly to emphasize in a special way certain feelings understood by the whole community and determined by their culture-patterns.

¹⁷ C. Sachs, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

The earliest songs, therefore, were entirely communal and not individual in function. And because of the close physiological connection between sound-reception and bodily movement singing and dancing were inseparable.

But in course of time we can imagine that a few individuals would discover the power of song for personal ends such as courtship. Thus, among a primitive people of to-day, Malinowski found

In the Trobriands, as with us, a tenor or baritone is sure of success with women. . . . A man who has a beautiful voice will like the women very much and they will like him.¹⁸

and

The good singer is only second in renown to the good dancer. The power of a beautiful voice is known and praised far and wide, and many instances of seduction by song are quoted.¹⁹

IMITATION OF ANIMAL VOICES

We admire the paintings of the cavemen and believe that the function of this art was either to induce the animals to appear or to drive them away, according to circumstances. Why should not the imitation of the voices of animals have had a similar magical purpose, perhaps a more practical effect? It is, I think, not by chance that even nowadays trappers and other hunters revert to the old practice of mimicking the call-notes of animals in order to lure them towards their traps or their guns. In the primeval forest, where the hunters had few and inferior weapons, we may suppose that they early discovered the value and use of mimicry.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENTIATION

The social life of the primitives was undoubtedly very much more uniform and collective than that of either ancient or present civilizations:

Primitive life is almost uniform, despite all differences in temperament, character and intelligence. Every act, be it practical or artistic, is understood by the fellow tribesmen, much as the animal's act is understood by its fellow creatures. Nor is primitive music the personal idiom, the individual expression of lonely masters. It says what everybody could say; it sings the life of a whole tribe; its soul is everybody's soul.²⁰

Nevertheless, individual differences must have existed. I believe that future researches into styles of performance will establish that some differentiation arose at a very early stage, although progress in this direction would have been very slow at first.

¹⁸ B. Malinowski, 'Sex Life of the Savages' (London, 1932), p. 478.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

²⁰ C. Sachs, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

It would have been surprising if the owner of a fine voice who found it brought him success with the womenfolk did not cultivate it so as to increase his advantage in courtship over other men. He would probably also modify the style of his singing in a manner which experience showed him to be most rewarding. Similarly the man who was most apt at imitating the calls of wild animals would gain prestige in his society, and this would encourage him to advance his range and ability in this direction, and thus experience the joys of individual interpretation.

Success in love and hunting often meant personal power as well, particularly in those societies in which domination by the strong was an integral part of the tribal social pattern.

In this individual differentiation in music, by whatever circumstances called forth, lay the genesis of individual art.

RHYTHM

Rhythm has been described as the very origin of music. But it is a vital element of life extending far beyond the sphere of music:

The whole of organic nature is characterized by periodicity. . . . The whole somatic sphere of animals, not excluding man, is periodic or rhythmic . . . from the heartbeat, the circulation of the blood, metabolism and respiration to temperature, the activity of the gastro-intestinal tract and the sex sphere.²¹

Rhythm, moreover, is a general concept that denotes not merely one simple mode of accent, but a great variety of periodical movement patterns:

Recently it has been discovered that every being has a peculiar movement, tempo, and consequently has a different rhythm. . . . In every activity a tendency, as it were, to rhythm is manifested, and each kind of work has its maximal rhythm. Besides, the frequency of rhythm varies in certain movements in accordance with the radius and weight of the particular organ. . . .²²

There are some rhythms, such as those of light, of which the pulsations are so rapid that we cannot perceive them except indirectly with the aid of mechanical means. Other rhythms, such as the movements of planets, are so slow and prolonged that again we can only indirectly detect them by measurements and observations over a long period. By contrast the periodicity of certain sound-waves, as for example those of lowest sounds or of instrumental or vocal vibrato, can often be perceived immediately. Sound-waves, in fact, lie nearer in the scale of frequencies to such obvious rhythms of the body as those of the heart-beat, breathing and the nervous system.

²¹ V. M. Bechtereiv, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 316.

During a musical event psycho-physiological processes in those persons—composers and performers—who “transmit” the music are balanced by similar processes in those who “receive” the music—the listeners. But to reach the receivers the messages from the transmitters must be conveyed by the medium of air—must, indeed, be converted into air sound-waves, whose patterns are of different quality from those of the nervous system. Yet although separated by this medium the musical experiences of both transmitters and receivers are essentially the same. We may, I think, therefore infer that there is some degree of affinity, if perhaps only in principle, between the rhythmic organization of the nervous system and that of the sound-waves which link the experiences of the partners in the musical event.

But here another factor enters. It has been found that we superimpose a grouping order of our own on incoming sound impulses, particularly those not produced by human agency. Thus

Man does not listen to the seconds of his watch or the jolts of his railway car without decomposing the endless sequences of uniform beats into an alternation of accented and unaccented beats.²³

This grouping activity of our perceptive organs was, of course, the central theme of the *Gestalt* school of psychology. By drawing attention to our ability, in any experience, to group all sensations into an apprehension of the whole situation, this school, particularly in regard to musical phenomena, has greatly influenced research into our perceptual activities.

In this connection we may note the practice, all over the world, of accompanying manual work with music. While the importance of this well-known phenomenon as a factor in the development of music has been exaggerated, and the number of songs or other musical devices exactly shaped to the rhythm of particular kinds of work, such as hewing, hauling and stamping, is much smaller than is generally supposed, there is no doubt that music has occasionally been used in this way. Marching-songs and songs like the Volga Boat Song correspond rhythmically to certain inner somatic rhythms and do help to ease the strain of marching soldiers, hikers and boatmen. In a comparable way

Many cases have been experienced by the writer where an unwillingness to sing on the part of the native has been overcome by beating together a couple of boomerangs. In every case it acts as a stimulant to greater enthusiasm.²⁴

How far these effects are due to the general stimulating power of music, or to the intimate association of music and magical rites in

²³ C. Sachs, *op. cit.*, p. 46.
²⁴ *Ibid.*

the early days of mankind is of course another question. We are here mainly concerned to note the ability of man to superimpose on melodic form rhythms which owe their source to his physiological structure.

In both the creation and the interpretation of music the rhythmic pattern will, I believe, depend very much on the total human situation in which they are effected. A composer, an interpreter and a listener will be rhythmically disposed towards music in a manner that corresponds to the specific bodily rhythms of, on the one hand, the particular individual temperaments of each and, on the other, the collective inheritance of the group of which they are members.

It is for this reason that we find differences in interpretation of the same musical work by representatives of different nations. It explains also the difficulty that western and eastern peoples find in appreciating each other's music, though differences of musical function also enter here. Furthermore, because in very distant periods of the past a people's physiological rhythms, such as the heart-beat and breathing, may well have had a different tempo from ours, and also because musical rhythmic structures were probably less complex than to-day, we shall, I believe, rarely be able correctly to reconstruct the music of those periods. Thus, according to Sachs,

Co-ordination of singing and bodily rhythms is weak on the level of the Veda and certain Patagonian tribes. But in the next higher stratum, most singing submits to the imperious rhythm of the body, which in its simplest form is an endless unorganized sequence of equal beats.²⁵

We thus find a process of differentiation in the history of rhythm comparable to that in the general history of music. Some idea of the various factors determining this very fascinating history of rhythm is given by Sachs again:

Tick-tock is more than just strong-weak/strong-weak. It is also light-dark/light-dark. . . . Two new elements have entered rhythmic organization: timbre and pitch. . . . Instruments meet this end. . . . The resulting rhythmic pattern is in the first place due to the player's personal motor impulse under the special conditions of mood and ability, age and sex, race and profession. But the shape and the playing position of the instrument are important factors too . . . all of them deflect the personal motor impulse into a special technique that determines the realization of musical ideas.²⁶

All these various rhythmic modes come into play and combine in the making of music and its enjoyment. It still remains to decide

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

whether underlying their combination is one fundamental principle. Margaret Phillips suggests

as a hypothesis for further investigation, that there is a general factor in aesthetic experience analogous to the hypothetical general factor in intellectual experience. . . . As far as my material goes, the form which this general factor most obviously takes, in which its existence can be most easily detected, is sensitiveness to and enjoyment of rhythm.²⁷

Many further studies will be necessary to substantiate the validity of this theory. Certainly the apparent similarity between rhythms of media that are so different calls for a more satisfactory explanation than any we are at present able to offer. I hope, however, to have made clear the importance of the dynamics of rhythm in the history of music.

CONCLUSION

Music historians during the last twenty years or more have increasingly studied the influence of social forces on music. They have ascertained many interesting facts about this influence, and the personalities of a composer or the history of a musical form frequently emerged in a completely different light.

The social forces themselves are, however, nothing but the formal expressions of primary dynamic factors such as reflex actions, emotional drives and instinctive urges. Even if with the scientific knowledge at present at our disposal we cannot understand as much of the dynamic character of nature as we should like to, we can at least recognize its existence and attempt to penetrate it to the best of our ability. Once we have discovered these foundations we shall be able to examine the social superstructure built upon them. This we must regard as a system of constant changes, of integrations and disintegrations building up both small and large entities such as national, cultural and other groups, whose behaviour patterns possess some permanence through historical periods, epochs and even ages. The character of these entities must have been determined by the functional modifications of the primary factors in harmony with the evolutionary changes of the universe, whose final cause in the Aristotelian sense has so far eluded our recognition.

It will be necessary to fit music into such a conception of the world, since its nature cannot be explained otherwise than as a means of satisfying human needs in a more or less complex manner. It must be recognized that its manifestations always possess a functional and purposeful character whose significance can in the last resort be deduced only from the influence of primary dynamic factors.

²⁷ M. Phillips, 'The Education of the Emotions' (London, 1937), p. 186f.

Such a functional view of music in all its different aspects will, I believe, enable us to find the vital links between different historical periods of music and between the social background of a period and its individual creations.

The evolutionary modifications of human needs and the consequent functional adaptations of the instruments of their satisfaction must, of course, have always been very gradual. Hence we are able to examine these adaptations in the form of historical entities in the sense mentioned above. We can at our leisure sift all the relevant facts and observe the effects of the functional expressions of the primary dynamic factors in music upon the sum-total of musical activities during any period.

Surveying history we shall find that some of the factors mentioned in this article have permeated music more thoroughly than others. One of the most potent factors in this respect is fear. It is easy to detect its influence in the music of the primitives and the ancient civilizations. But I maintain that the dynamism of fear is still active in the music of our times. Let us for example take the feeling of elation which music brings to many people:

Most music exalts me. Beethoven takes me soaring up into the clouds. . . . After a good concert of good music one feels strangely elated, yet soothed. . . . I am listening to music in the hope of this experience of elation.²⁸

Elation contains elements of pride, of self-assertion, of the feeling of having overcome some obstacle, which in itself might have raised fears. That feeling of rising above the daily routine as if to join hands with higher gods is elation in its highest form and often lies at the bottom of the adventurous spirit:

In all dangerous sports, the danger evokes some degree of fear; and the energy of this tendency, being sublimated, adds to the zest of striving and to the satisfaction of success; that is the normal course for all who are capable of such sublimation and therefore capable of enjoying such sport. Big-game shooting and mountain climbing are the outstanding instances.²⁹

Does not this passage remind one of the big-game hunter at a time when game hunting was not a sport but a bitter necessity and when the elation felt after the deed had been accomplished was frequently expressed in an auditory way? How often this sense of elation contains sublimated fear has again well been expressed by McDougall:

Watch children entering the sea for the first time when breakers are rolling on the beach. With very few exceptions all display fear; but, while some refuse to face the ordeal, others, with or without

²⁸ Some answers to the questionnaire (cf. note 3).

²⁹ W. McDougall, 'The Energies of Men', 5th Ed. (London, 1942), p. 308.

encouragement, sublimate their fear and find delight in the exciting experience. To this day the sight of great breakers dashing on the beach evokes fear in me, but the fear does not prevent me from hurling myself into them; rather it lends vigour to my movements and zest to the enjoyment.³⁰

I have always found that between these emotional states as described by McDougall and the elation felt during and at the conclusion of a really fine performance of a great work of music there is a certain similarity, which I think justifies the claim that fear plays a part in the effects of certain music. May not perhaps some of the wondrous, apparently inexplicable nature of music which has baffled and exhilarated men for so long be compounded in part from the fear-component which still overshadows our lives so strongly?

I feel confident also that the full explanation of the psychological difference between concordance and discordance, between the Apollonian and the Dionysian aspects of music in the Nietzschean sense, will not be found until the element of fear has been recognized as one of its principal constituent factors. Could not perhaps that difference in approach to music between the German and the English people also be regarded up to a point as being due to a difference in degree of the influence of fear, a difference which could possibly be borne out by the recent strong impetus which the interest in music in England received during the war at a time of great national insecurity?

Much less of a problem is presented by the combination of function of the two organs of the ear, the saccule and the cochlea. If loud noise could by its very impact on the organ of posture disturb man's equilibrium, driving him to physical activity, the importance of this combination is relevant in the close connection between music and motion (dance) throughout history. It may well be because of the lessening of this combined physiological effect and a growing differentiation in the activities of these two organs that music has ceased during the last five hundred years at least to affect men as profoundly and elementally as it did before, and further that a mainly horizontally conceived music has changed to one vertically conceived, culminating in the three-dimensional harmony with its new ways of assuring a physical equilibrium through sounds of a definite order.

The importance of the other factors mentioned in this article need not again be stressed here since their activities, namely that of rhythm and those causing individual differentiation and the

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

branching off of music from speech, can be detected everywhere in musical history.

In conclusion I hope to have contributed a little towards a functional dynamic approach to music, an approach which I believe will eventually help the study of many as yet unsolved problems of the history of music in a more realistic and hence more scientific perspective. I trust that the time at my disposal at present will allow me personally to apply the methods described to some of the more recent problems of music.

NOTE.—The author wishes to express his gratitude to Mr. G. H. Elphick for his valuable advice on literary matters.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of 'Music and Letters'

Sir,

When the Library of Mr. T. W. Taphouse of Oxford was dispersed after his death, the whereabouts of many valuable musical documents ceased to be generally known and it is no longer possible to cite them in a bibliography. If any of your readers should happen to know into whose possession the following documents have passed, will they please inform me?

(a) A letter written by Dr. Burney to Dr. Callcott dated January 29th 1802 on the subject of Dr. William Boyce.

(b) A catalogue of the sale of the Library belonging to Dr. Boyce, held June 14th to 16th 1779.

According to the Dictionary of National Biography a small three-quarter length portrait of William Boyce by Joshua Reynolds was in the possession of Mr. J. Rendall in the year 1886. I should be most grateful if anyone could throw light on its present whereabouts. Similarly, I should be glad of information about the Closterman portrait of John Blow, formerly in the possession of Dr. A. H. Mann of King's College, Cambridge, or the Riley portrait of Blow which belonged to the late Mr. Detmar J. Blow.

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H. WATKINS SHAW,
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for Hertfordshire.*

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Music in the Romantic Era. By Alfred Einstein. pp. 371. (Dent, London, 1947.) 30s.

It is a pleasure to be allowed to listen to Dr. Einstein talk, out of the fullness of his mind, on so rich a subject as the main stream of nineteenth-century music. The volume forms part of the Norton History of Music, but it is not the kind of students' handbook that might be expected from that announcement. The dates and biographical details which candidates for examinations may look for will not be found—or, at least, not consistently. The period is roughly that from 'Der Freischütz' to 'Parzival'. Much that belongs to its history had to be left out in a one-volume conspectus. Dr. Einstein has ruled out any closely technical consideration of the music of the period, on the one hand, and on the other the discussion of all manner of topics in the life of the world and in the lives of the great composers which he must have been tempted to bring in. The line Dr. Einstein has chosen to pursue lies between the technical and the social! Above all, it is a personal, subjective book. A certain looseness, a certain inequality, suggest derivation from lectures.

It is good talk, but German talk and, though the words are English, strange of flavour and sometimes obscure. On Loewe: "In his songs, and other vocal works as well, there prevails a division between genius and Philistinism". On Wolf's choice of poets: "Within such a frame, so remotely placed and yet so uniform, he created . . ." The book is presumably a translation; and the presumed translator does not altogether inspire confidence. Schumann is here represented as calling the four movements of Chopin's Sonata in B \flat minor "four of his most foolish children". But Schumann's phrase is familiar: "vier seiner tollsten Kinder". Whatever "toll" may mean (mad, wild, extravagant) it is certainly not "foolish".

Another criticism concerns the adjective in the title of the book. Men coin words for convenience, and the next thing that happens is the tyranny of a Frankenstein's monster; the inventor is enslaved by his creation. A word like "romanticism" comes into use, and the next stage is an assumption that it stands for something almost concrete, almost a species, like the giraffe. Is it unfair to say that Germans seem particularly given to idolizing words? Dr. Einstein's reader grows weary of this word "romantic", so emptied of meaning does it become in his pages, or at least reduced to a mere synonym of "nineteenth-century". In his least persuasive chapter—his first—our author attempts to define romanticism in such a way as to embrace all the celebrated composers of his period, Weber and Schubert, Liszt and Brahms, Wagner and Verdi, Rossini (the 'Barber', it is maintained, is a romantic opera), Donizetti and Offenbach. Berlioz, utterly ignorant of Bach and Handel, disliked them, and this was a romantic attitude. Schumann and Brahms respected the old masters; their attitude was romantic no less. Such differences are covered by the generous expression "the polarity of the

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contrasts in Romantic music". In 1865 Liszt (a life-long Catholic) was admitted into minor orders, or "fled into the haven of the Catholic Church", as Dr. Einstein puts it; and he adds: "This was a typically Romantic step, though one less common among musicians than among poets". Here again we ask whether the word "romantic" has not, by the extension of its use, lost every significance. Up to now Dr. Einstein has applied the word to any phenomenon not characteristic of the eighteenth century; but even in that century was it uncommon for persons to seek admission into Holy Orders, as Liszt did, "tired" in Dr. Einstein's words, and laying "disappointment and bitterness to rest in the Church's comforting arms"?

One other question must be asked: why should the survey stop, more or less, with 'Parsifal', when for another quarter of a century European music continued (in the compositions of Mahler and early Schoenberg, for instance) to exhibit the nineteenth-century or "romantic" characteristics our author has described? It is time, however, to give an example or two of the suggestive and illuminating detail in which the book is rich. Weber's discovery of Romanticism in Bach is interesting: "Bach's characteristic feature was", he said in 1821, "even in its strictness, really romantic, of fundamentally German nature, perhaps in contrast to Handel's more classical greatness". As an example of early local colour: "Spohr wrote a rondo on 'genuine Spanish melodies' in his violin Concerto in G minor, Op. 28" (1809). Coming to Schumann, Dr. Einstein defends 'Genoveva' as composed "with high dramatic skill and a sharp eye for the theatre", continuing:

The sanctimonious conclusion of the whole is as little—or as much—to be criticized as that of Richard Wagner's 'Tannhäuser'. The true reason for the failure, from the point of view of subject-matter, lies in the fact that the work was too little Romantic for the period . . . The opera is a highly artistic piece of characterization and psychological delineation, without the tired quality that otherwise customarily mars Schumann's later works.

Who, not of the inner circle of the Royal Musical Association, is familiar with the name of J. V. von Püttlingen (1803-83)? His 300 songs, written under Schumann's influence, include a complete setting of Heine's 'Heimkehr' (88 pieces), which Dr. Einstein calls "A cycle . . . in all shadings of the sentimental, the pathetic, the ironical, and in the iridescent mingling of all these nuances, in the sudden change of the tragic into parody, in cold and daring wit". It is curious to learn that Robert Franz censured Brahms's songs as being too erotic. When such a critic as Einstein can speak as warmly as he does of Mendelssohn's 'First Walpurgis Night' it is time for the rest of us to turn up again that neglected work. And his choice of Mendelssohn's best songs (on p. 186) is worth noting. He censures Wagner severely for having slated Rossini's 'Stabat Mater', at a time when he "could not possibly have known the work"; and the remark (unexpanded) sets us looking up the circumstances, to find, indeed, that Wagner's article was written in 1841 and the 'Stabat Mater' not performed until the next year.

The curious fact is here mentioned that the first movement alone of Alkan's Concerto in G \sharp minor contains 1,343 bars, or more than Beethoven's entire Op. 106; and that Brahms's Op. 116 No. 4 was originally entitled 'Nocturne'. Early in the chapter on Wagner this suggestive phrase occurs: "With him, however, it was not a matter of *music*, but of the *effect* to be achieved through music". And is not this a curious

premonition of the love-making of Tristan and Isolde, found in a dialogue in Friedrich Schlegel's novel 'Lucinde' (1799) ?

O eternal yearning! At last the vain longing of day, the empty brilliance, will sink and be extinguished, and a great night of love will be felt eternally at rest.

What one ventures to call the looseness, the informality of the book, is illustrated by the fact that, while Dr. Einstein sees in the Russian nationalists (Glinka, Dargomizhsky and Mussorgsky) a reaction against romanticism he deals at generous length with those composers and their set. It must be said that the argument sags. On p. 197: "The masks fell away; the realities showed themselves". In other words, the Russians were anti-romantic. But, on p. 311, Mussorgsky "still remained a Romantic"; and on p. 314:

He hated the "salon composer" Chopin. He was an expressionist; his art addressed itself directly to listeners, the "folk". And in precisely that respect he was Romantic.

At the same time there was Tchaikovsky, representing "the "last phase of Romanticism—exhibitionism of feeling". In his last symphony "this exhibitionism found a final escape-value" (what frightful jargon!); and "here", says our author, "we stand at the end of the Romantic movement". The reader may not be convinced; he may be inclined rather to suggest 'Wozzeck' as the last chrysanthemum of the romantic autumn. But he is always interested.

R. C.

Education for Music. By Noel V. Hale. pp. 243. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1947.) 12s. 6d.

The Education Act of 1944 has presented opportunities both tremendous and challenging. So far as music is concerned, opportunity is now provided—if teachers can be found and local authorities are willing—for every child in the State schools to receive a progressive and continuous musical education of at least ten years' duration. Expressed in such terms, that opportunity constitutes possibly the greatest challenge in English musical life to-day.

But a statutory enactment can do no more than furnish opportunities: for its complement it requires teachers and leaders whose vision will translate them into realities. It is therefore only right that a great deal of thinking, such as Mr. Hale has put into this book, should be spent on the subject of musical education.

The first necessity is to establish the claims of music to a place of full dignity in a liberal education. In spite of the progress of the last twenty years—in which the Cambridgeshire Report, 'Music and the Community', was a conspicuous landmark—that task is by no means accomplished. It is greatly to our loss that we have not a Hadow with us to continue to urge the claims of music in humane letters. His essay on that subject carries a nobility, authority and conviction which is still needed. Mr. Hale's book is not, unfortunately, compelling to read, and, in spite of its schematic headings and divisions, it leaves at times an impression of lack of cogency. The section headed 'The Nature and Attributes of Music in relation to General Education' is devoid of power, and will probably make few converts.

Our vision of the place of music in education must next be interpreted into terms suitable for the many differing elements passing through our schools—the embryo professionals (teachers or performers), the amateurs,

both performers and listeners, of the type produced by the "modern school" as well as by the "grammar school". Though music remains the constant factor, the approach must vary. The same is true at the stage of 'Further Education'. Mr. Hale, however, seems more concerned with tools and agents, and falls short in interpreting the vision into the content of the musical curriculum—save in the broadest and most unexceptionable terms. His exposition of machinery permits us occasional stimulating glimpses—his plea for the study of music in its own terms (p. 7) or his case for instrumental teaching (p. 40) are instances. It is also sound to declare that "the experienced teacher will always seek to approach the best music by natural and convenient steps, using what the pupils can already *hear* as the means of their hearing still more". One wishes that the writer had left the dead to bury its dead (pp. 15–117) and given us a more detailed exposition of all that this remark implies.

Of the less essential part of the book, musicians hitherto unacquainted with the system of State education prevailing before 1944 will probably find the most interest in the many sidelights on the curious ways in which the extension of music-teaching could be affected—in the same unexpected way that the nature of religious instruction might, in the last resort, still depend on the efficiency of the sanitary arrangements of the school. But in this retrospect one cannot forbear to say that something less than justice is done, in reference to the period before 1918, to the great work of W. G. McNaught in promoting a successful and widespread movement to teach singing from notation; in which respect, notwithstanding eurhythmics, percussion and pipes, we are now far below the standards of those days.

The constructive part of the book is to be found in the 'Nineteen Provisional Recommendations', and here it may be said without reserve, whether one agrees with them or not, that everyone concerned with ways and means will find sanity and sincerity combined. But in the end it is the teacher who will bring it all to life; and unless we succeed in training teachers who are good musicians and also capable of working out the details of teaching the many different aspects of the art to the vast majority of unselected pupils, everything else will remain as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. The author's attitude towards the teacher will command warm approval. "Thus", says Mr. Hale, "if education is to embrace music as *part* of its structure, music teachers, as ordinary staff members, must accept their appropriate share of responsibility for the *whole* of education."

H. W. S.

The Mirror of Music: 1844–1944. By Percy A. Scholes. 2 vols., pp. 964.
(Novello, London & Oxford University Press, 1947.) 52s. 6d.

Congratulations must first of all be extended—though belatedly—to 'The Musical Times' for having reached and passed its centenary; and secondly to Dr. Percy Scholes—more topically—for celebrating the occasion by the handsome publication of a variety of extracts from that most excellent and happily long-lived musical monthly.

No doubt these two volumes could have been compressed into one; but that would have made them too unwieldy for a bedside book—and we may be sure that musicians and music-lovers for many a long week to come will retire to rest with one or the other, provided they do not prescribe reading for themselves as a soporific. Dr. Scholes's gleanings

from the M.T. will keep them awake for hours. The illustrations alone, to begin with, will leave them no peace: there are 118 plates containing something like 500 enticing pictures. As for the text, only a very strong-minded or a very somnolent reader will be able to make up his mind to peruse a chapter of so and so many pages and then firmly turn off the light. Anyway, there are no chapters, though the book is divided into sections dealing with this, that and the other musical topic: there are scraps and snippets of all sorts, and the eye has no sooner detached itself from one than it is riveted upon another. The very oddments that will fail to interest some reader will induce him to flip over a few pages in search of something else, and it will go hard if he is unlucky twice in succession. For systematic search in cold daylight, moreover, there is a capital index to guide the inquirer to any given point in what would otherwise be a perfect maze, fascinating to those in search of unlooked-for adventure, but exasperating to those who want particular information.

The facts given by the M.T. may be taken on trust as accurate, but for possible slips due to human fallibility, not only because they were recorded contemporaneously, but also because we have learnt as long ago as any of us can remember to take its editorship for granted as thoroughly reliable. It has always been admirably courageous, too—see, for instance, its bold tackling of ‘The Bogus Degree Traffic’ in the section devoted to ‘The Universities and Music’. This was in the 1870s, when, we learn, it was possible for such advertisements as this to appear in a newspaper:

WANTED, A DEGREE, for either Mus. D. or Mus. Bac. (Foreign).—State lowest terms, with name of university.

There is no doubt that if it is now impossible, we have to thank the M.T. for doing its bit towards making it so.

Dr. Scholes’s comments may also be accepted as trustworthy. Just to show that he is not entirely infallible, he tells us in a caption on plate 9 that Charles Lockey was “The first Elijah” (Lockey was the first solo tenor in ‘Elijah’; the first singer of the name-part was Staudigl.) Further browsing may reveal something more of the kind. But that is not very likely; what is certain is that ‘The Mirror of Music’ will go on producing instructive and entertaining reflections.

The M.T. has always been generous in quoting its more obscure contemporaries for our edification or amusement. Here, taken at random, is a passage from an early one which has not stayed the hundred years’ course—‘The Pickwick Songster’—showing, if it shows nothing else, that criticism was more vigorously outspoken once than it is to-day :

Unfortunately for old Cook of the above vocal dust-hole [“The Mogul . . . situated in the filthiest and most blackguard part of Drury Lane, . . . opened every evening in the week for a vocal display, the charge for admittance being 2d., which same 2d. is consigned to the pocket of the money-scraping, professional-grinding Cook, . . .”], whom we slightly roasted in our first article, we heard, a week ago, of his having in his utter despair at the overwhelming chastisement of our rod, given ten shillings for the insertion of an article to cut us up to mincemeat in a dirty and obscure work called ‘Penny Town’, whose beastly proprietor will unquestionably, ere many weeks are over, be dancing on the treadmill and fattening on skilly in the House of Correction.

Alas! that ‘The Pickwick Songster’ is no more, and that the pernicious law of libel will not let even the M.T. write in such richly admonitory terms.

E. B.

Georg Hager: a Meistersinger of Nürnberg, 1552-1634. By Clair Hayden Bell. Part I, pp. 431. (University of California Publications in Modern Philology, Vol. 29.) (University of California Press; Cambridge University Press, 1947.) 27s. 6d.

Of the *Meistersinger* it may be said that their chief service to music was to inspire Wagner's opera. Their immediate contribution to the art was insignificant. The historian may note in their melodies features common to them and to the Lutheran chorale, but he cannot feel that this artificial association of humdrum verse and humdrum music deserves more than casual attention. However, experience shows that a researcher's zeal can be aroused by the most unpromising material. There is certainly nothing casual about this volume, which consists of a study of Hager's life and work and prints his seventeen *Meistertöne*. Three further volumes contain the text of his poems. A reviewer who does not share an author's enthusiasm can do little more than indicate whether the work is well or ill done. This particular work is well done. J. A. W.

Mozart's Operas: a Critical Study. By Edward J. Dent. Second Edition. pp. 276. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1947.) 16s.

It is fascinating to compare this new edition of a book for which Mozartians have been positively hungering for years with that published as long ago as 1913—fascinating and only in one particular just a little disappointing. To clear away that small grievance, let it be said at the outset that Professor Dent tells us little or nothing more about the music of Mozart's operas than he did at first. And the truth is that one does when all is said, want to read as much as possible about that from such an authority, just as in a theatre one cares very little, when it comes to the point, whether, for example, "Mi tradi" was an afterthought, whether it is dramatically justifiable, whether if sung at all it is sung in the best possible place, and so on, so long as one does hear that glorious piece and hears it well done.

Professor Dent must, of course, know and feel a great deal more about Mozart's dramatic music to-day than he did as a young man, and it is surely not unreasonable to regret that he does not choose to impart his knowledge and transmit his feelings, as "revised" in himself. He might so easily have done more to still the hunger of Mozart's devotees—and his own—as well as to stimulate a new appetite in others.

Apart from that, his book is immensely enriched. Theatrical and literary history have yielded the author much new material for a fresh study of the librettos of every one of Mozart's major operas, and many matters of a general nature are explained at some suitable point or other with masterly lucidity. One may not always agree with Professor Dent, but even where one does not his explanations are absorbingly interesting. Here is an example, chosen from one of the new passages in the first chapter on 'Idomeneo':

It seems to have been Mozart's invariable practice—probably it was the regular practice of all operatic composers in those days—to compose about half an opera on receipt of the libretto and to postpone composing the rest until rehearsals had already begun. . . . Singers, as all composers must have known by sad experience, were more likely to be troublesome than not, and Mozart spent much of his time in accommodating his operas to suit their requirements. The result of this system is that when we come to put Mozart's operas on the modern stage we find that in every one of them the later acts show evidence of alteration and patching, and the modern

producer is confronted with the most curious problems in attempting to reduce them to some sort of dramatic unity and continuity.

Every one? The muddles in 'Don Giovanni' and 'The Magic Flute', the opportunist arias in 'Figaro', the goings to seed in 'Idomeneo' and 'Seraglio' are well known. But was there any patching in the second act of 'Così fan tutte'? I remember no documentary evidence and can see none on the stage.

Another thing I fail to remember is any "dead wood" in the first edition of the Dent book. He tells us he has cut some out. What was it? Perhaps he means some wood that was green in 1913 but had dried up since. At any rate he has cut his original first and last chapters, not because they contained anything about which he has changed his mind, but because we, his readers, have outgrown them. In those days opera-goers were obsessed by Wagner and had to be told with the greatest circumspection that Mozart was at least as great an operatic composer, and why. Most of them believe it now, and if anything it is Wagner who stands in need of defence, or would do if he had not in his own day been more than capable of looking after himself. But Mozart's music still needs very careful attention from those who feel it deeply, as distinct from those who merely know about it, even if they have been trained in what they fondly believe to be the true tradition, which may quite well be true only for the temporary authorities who thought fit to establish it. Witness the recent performances in London by the Vienna State Opera and for that matter our own new Covent Garden 'Magic Flute'. The pretty but small, fussy inflected singing, intent on declamation but never on spacious lines, which the Viennese singers gave us, and the interpretation of both conductors, which too often dragged details out of the context at the expense of a total impression, all of which made the music dainty, passionless and devoid of mystery, was not what Mozart asked for but what some nineteenth-century conductor's misapplied genius had wanted. Such singing would have done very well for Wolf or Mahler—and perhaps here we have it, for I suspect it was the Mahler tradition to which we were treated, certainly not anything one could imagine a Mozart tradition to have been. Of course the performances were in many ways delightful, but in the last resort they aroused our interest in scenic rather than musical presentation. And that is why, while welcoming anything Professor Dent can tell us out of his rich store of special knowledge about librettos and production, one cannot help regretting that he did not take the opportunity, on revising this splendid book of his, to write extended and detailed separate chapters on the music of at least six of the operas. If the new edition had been twice as extensive, nobody would have minded its turning out twice as expensive.

As it is, it gives admirable value for what is for the present day a comparatively modest price. One could go on for pages pointing to interesting observations in it. Professor Dent makes it clear, for instance, why 'Così' was not popular in the nineteenth century: not so much because it was thought "immoral" as because it was anti-romantic, while 'Don Giovanni' at any rate lent itself readily to romantic interpretations, 'The Magic Flute' actually contained romantic elements and the public easily allowed itself to be hoodwinked by the "happy" ending of 'Figaro', as though a libertine who turns to his wife after a defeat elsewhere could even for a moment be supposed cured for ever of

infidelity. We are made to see, too, why Germans think 'The Magic Flute' Mozart's greatest work and why they perform it better than the Italian operas. Thus Dent:

With all this [Wagner's] nebulous philosophizing—the reader is welcome to accuse me of it rather than Wagner—Mozart has nothing whatever to do. Perhaps he opened the door to it in 'The Magic Flute', but death cut him off before he could pass through it himself.

But most Germans attempt to push him through it, because that would place him on their side; for they do not like to see him, understandably enough, as the cosmopolitan artist he obviously is, who could be Germanic in his last opera, not because of his birth, but because he could be anything he chose. We are not told this, but it is one of the great merits of this book that it prompts reflection on any number of things it does not explicitly state. Yet again, many readers who can see well enough that much of the music of 'The Magic Flute' is German in a way that of the other great operas is not, would doubtless have welcomed more help from Professor Dent in their endeavours to account for this than he chooses to offer them.

But if we do not find as much about Mozart's music as we should like, there is a good deal to be found about that of earlier operas on similar subjects that would be very difficult to come by elsewhere, and all this is of the greatest possible interest, even though in the eyes of some readers it may detract from Mozart by appearing to show how like his predecessors' and contemporaries' music his own often was, on the surface at any rate. In point of fact it does nothing of the kind, of course. We know, or if we do not we must make up our mind to it, that Mozart, like Shakespeare, was a surpassingly great artist, not as an innovator, but as a refiner and an intensifier.

E. B.

Schubert : a Symposium. Edited by Gerald Abraham. ('Music of the Masters' series.) pp. 298 + 44. (Lindsay Drummond, London.) 9s. 6d.

Let us take any book which tackles seriously the job of literary criticism: 'The Road to Xanadu' for instance. Imagine that book with all the multiplicity of Coleridge quotations, which are woven into the lucid unfolding of the author's argument, lumped together in a supplement at the end of the book and anchored to their contexts by number references. The difficulty of following the sequence of thought would be arduous in the extreme. Now a most commendable fact about the six Schubertian studies in this symposium, edited by Professor Abraham, is the readiness with which the various authors quote chapter and verse for each point they make. For reasons of cheapness and convenience, presumably, these quotations have been removed from the body of prose where they belong and placed altogether at the end of the book. It starts, then, with an enormous handicap. Essays which come trailing clouds of footnotes are hard enough: one must read them at two levels of consciousness, as it were; but to read a book with one finger in the back, obliged continually to throw masses of pages to and fro, is far worse. Future editions of this excellent book—and there surely will have to be some—should adjust this matter.

The tone of these essays is not that of the apostrophic and fulsome commentators of the near past—far from it. Throughout it is reasoned

and grave—almost grey—this prose which treats of a composer who wrote only poetry and who, like most poets when they fail, failed dismally. And it is interesting that Schubert's failures have provoked the two most interesting and fascinating essays in the book: Mr. A. E. F. Dickinson's on the choral works and Mr. A. Hyatt King's on the operas.

Mr. Dickinson is at pains to strip away the veils from our eyes when we look at the Schubertian settings of the Mass. He points out "the compelling quality" of the composer's contemporary work, only to warn us not to let it prejudice our judgment; he gives Schubert credit for far more contrapuntal manipulation than is usually allowed him, but stresses the fact that the technical achievement neither solves any problem nor is in itself adequate for the task it seeks to do. He condemns—and rightly—Schubert's light-hearted approach to the individual and universal tragedy set forth by the words of the Mass, and compares it unfavourably with the approach of Bach in the B minor and Beethoven in the D major Mass. Nor is it of much use for other critics to take up the cudgels on Schubert's behalf by pointing out that he was only thirty-one when he composed the last Mass (in E \flat) and Bach and Beethoven were each over fifty. There is no need to defend the C major Symphony on these grounds, and Schubert must stand or fall in his masses on the grounds of integrity of artistic purpose and spiritual content. Here Mr. Dickinson goes no farther: surely it is possible to do so. Schubert was not the brother of free-thinking Ignaz for nothing. In spite of that rather unctuous protest to his father that "he never forced devotion in himself" (the kind of thing that many irreligious sons write to devout fathers) there is little evidence that Schubert possessed the capacity for spiritual suffering and aspiration such as Bach and Beethoven revealed. The only moment when the depths seem to be plumbed is in the "Agnus Dei" of the E \flat Mass, and into this agonized prayer for the lifting of an intolerable burden of sin we may read what we wish.

No such fundamental reason is apparent to account for Schubert's failure as an operatic composer, unless we subscribe fully to Mr. King's view that he was unable to see that his libretti were ill-suited to the fashion of the moment, to begin with, and then was lacking in the sustained dramatic power which would have given them theatrical life. Schubert, it is clear, was extremely anxious to achieve a successful operatic venture, and eagerly set any libretti which came his way. If chance had provided him with a fine libretto, the Schubertian opera might have been created in the same way that the incidence of 'Gretchen' brought into existence the Schubertian song.

The whole essay is extremely valuable as the first critical commentary in English on these totally ignored Schubertian products; at least Mr. King may succeed in arousing a belated interest in some of the fine arias scattered in their pages. And such a commentary was long overdue; look at the large proportion of any biography of the composer taken by the works for the stage.

The orchestral music and the music for piano are surveyed *in extenso* during the course of the book. Dr. Mosco Carner has shown in former essays on the early Schubert symphonies his sympathetic understanding of the young composer's ideals, and the generous allowance of space to Schubert's orchestral music gives him the opportunity to develop his ideas fully. But his pages on the "unfinished" Symphony are

outstandingly good: penetrating when he examines technical device, convincing in his programmatic findings, there is an infectious enthusiasm about his whole treatment of the work. The same spirit is there when he deals with the great C major Symphony, although his idea of this work as a "Wanderer" symphony is dubious, particularly as he wishes to show its connection with Schubert's "wanderer" motives and "marching" motives: surely two completely incompatible ideas.

The finest aspect of Mrs. Kathleen Dale's careful treatment of the piano music is her frequent and always illuminating parallelisms between these works—especially the sonatas—and the songs. In her paragraph on that unaccountably neglected Sonata in A minor, Op. 143, she says:

The whole movement is a wonderful alternation between the austere sublimity of the first subject and the warm expressiveness of the second, whose group of simple repeated chords in metrical patterns are like clusters of stars twinkling in a distant sky. Indeed the two subjects seem to typify respectively the contrasted attributes of two Schubert songs portraying the stars: the remote detachment of 'Abendstern' and the friendly nearness of 'Die Sterne' (Leitner).

A good touchstone whereby to distinguish between real and superficial knowledge of Schubert's piano music is provided by the seventh variation of Op. 35. Mrs. Dale's words on this quintessential Schubertian paragraph inspire the reader with confidence.

He will feel the same confidence in Professor Westrup's chapter on the chamber music, for here, there is no doubt, is a deep knowledge of the subject which commands respect even when judgments are at variance with his own. Besides having read all Schubert's chamber music, Professor Westrup gives the impression that he has also read all the literature on it, and occasional suggestions from other men's writings outcrop into his own. The slight resemblance between the opening of the minuet of the string Quartet in A minor and the song 'Schöne Welt, wo bist du?' is surely a pure coincidence; and even more strained is the effort to see a connection between the very opening bars of the same work and those of 'Gretchen'. It is a valuable contribution to Schubertian analysis to show technical links between song and instrumental movement, but when these connections are used—as they are in the above instances—to provide a programmatic interpretation of the movement, based on the words of an already composed song, we are on very shaky ground.

Mr. Alec Robertson's warm and intimate style is completely fitting to his survey of the songs, and his interpretation of the song-cycle 'Die schöne Müllerin' is certainly very original. He sees Schubert in the young miller, Beethoven in the huntsman, and in the maid of the mill—"the commanding success that Beethoven achieved". We have, perhaps, been too unkind to the interpretative powers of some German critics.

Professor Abraham's part in the shaping of this book can only be guessed at by the reader; but the excellence of it is obvious in many ways. There are no tiresome repetitions of points of analysis, quotations from documents or from the music itself, such as would be inevitable in a compilation of entirely independent essays. Presumably the list of compositions with its full and valuable annotations is his sole direct contribution to the book, and it is a matter of regret that it is an isolated one. What an essay worth having would have been 'The Schubert Idiom' by him. This last chapter of the book, which should have been a

consummation of the six main essays, is a little disappointing. Dr. T. C. L. Pritchard glances at the composer's total output, but it is all very general and inconclusive.

What is the final impression after many re-readings of this book? That it has all the necessary qualities of thoroughness, acute observation and sustained interest, but yet, considered as a whole, just fails to reach the authoritative finality of inspired criticism. M. J. E. B.

Felix Mendelssohn: Letters. Edited by G. Selden-Goth. (Elek, London, 1947.) 16s.

The centenary of Mendelssohn's death has brought no rumour that anyone is busy preparing a collected edition of his letters. Perhaps this vast but highly desirable enterprise should wait a little longer, until it is known for certain whether or not the Mendelssohniana originally housed in the Berlin State Library have survived Nazi pogrom. There is still a faint hope that the tantalizing lack of the composer's letters to his wife may yet be made good; though these might not, of course, prove nearly so revealing as we readily imagine. Meanwhile, the principal need is for English translations of those individual collections of letters which have hitherto been available only in German; in particular of the extensive and lively correspondence with Karl Klingemann (published at Essen in 1909), which conveys so much more than any other of the real, uncensored Mendelssohn.

However, so good a general selection as Mrs. Selden-Goth's is very welcome. There has been none of comparable value in English since Lady Wallace's Victorian translation of the two volumes edited by Paul and Carl Mendelssohn, the composer's brother and son. And the best of subsequent German selections, Ernst Wolff's in the 'Meister-Briefe' series (Berlin, 1907) is not nearly as large and representative as this. More than a hundred and fifty letters, covering a period from Mendelssohn's thirteenth year until his last, are given in whole or part. Although disappointingly few of these (only ten or so) appear in English for the first time, the translations are at once more faithful and more acceptable to a modern reader than the great majority of their predecessors. Whether the editor has herself had any hand in these translations is not quite clear. According to her preface "the older ones, as well as those made for this volume . . . have been revised by Mrs. Marion Saerchinger."

Among the newcomers to English, it is good to have the delightful thirteen-year-old's Swiss picture (to Zelter), which was Wolff's opening choice, and a few extracts from the Klingemann volume. One of these at least may tempt readers to explore that volume further: "yesterday we practised his [Neukomm's] 'Ten Commandments' in the Singakademie; the chorus 'Thou shalt not commit adultery' sounded excellent. The girls do not know what they are singing about, and the married women do not care."

The letters are printed, no doubt with artistic intention, in fourteen-point italic type. This may not be found unpleasing in itself, once the reader has stood the momentary initial shock of foreseeing a visit to his oculist. But it has the grave disadvantage that Roman type, used where italic would be normal, does not stand out at all clearly. For example, in Mendelssohn's account of his first visit to Birmingham (Letter to Hiller, December 10th 1837) few readers would be made aware of the

ironic underlining in "I have never before achieved such a decided effect with my music as there". This is specially unfortunate as the editor has clearly troubled to refer to the best source for the letter: Hiller's 'Letters and Recollections'. Paul and Carl Mendelssohn, and Lady Wallace translating their text, do not indicate the underlining at all.

It is a pity that this usually careful checking of sources does not extend to a correction of the date of the 'Elijah' letter to Schubring on p. 321, which is consequently out of sequence. It should be 1845, not 1842. Mendelssohn did practically nothing about 'Elijah' between 1839 and 1845. Paul's and Carl's misreading was accepted by Lady Wallace, but it could have been rectified by reference to the Schubring 'Briefwechsel' or to Edwards's 'History of Elijah.'

The illustrations are many and excellent.

J. F. W.

On Music and Musicians. By Robert Schumann. Edited by Konrad Wolff. pp. 274. (Dobson, London, 1947.) 15s.

Two years before his death Schumann published a selection from his writings in the 'Neue Zeitschrift für Musik' (the magazine he founded in 1834 and edited for the next ten years) under the title 'Music and Musicians'. The first English edition of this work appeared in the years 1877-80, translated and edited by Mrs. Fanny Raymond Ritter, and now from America comes a new edition edited by Konrad Wolff and translated by the late Paul Rosenfeld.

The new version has many things to commend it. Most of the illustrations are of a welcome unfamiliarity, the type is easier on the eye, the translation is less unnatural and archaic, and the editor has contributed an interesting preface appraising Schumann's literary style and summarizing his aims; furthermore, there are numerous editorial footnotes in the course of the essays that throw light on many points. But the book's main virtue is its lay-out. In her first English edition Mrs. Ritter departed from Schumann's original chronological order of articles and made some attempt to segregate general articles and specific reviews. Konrad Wolff has re-arranged the collection even further, so that in the first section of the book, 'On Music', the reader can get a comprehensive idea of Schumann's general views on music, and in the second section, 'On Musicians', of his specific criticisms of individual composers and their works—all grouped together under each composer's name.

But there are several notable omissions and additions. In the preface Mr. Wolff rightly lays strong emphasis on Schumann's dislike of "Philistinism" and his determination to oppose it vigorously in his magazine whenever opportunity arose. Why, then, omit from the first section of the book two such articles as 'The Devil's Romanticists' and 'The Prize Symphony', in both of which Schumann's blood is up in no uncertain manner? As his excuse for leaving out articles on certain composers the editor argues that their work is little known and of little interest to present-day readers. Nevertheless, it would have given a more complete picture both of the period and of Schumann as critic could the articles on such people as Sterndale Bennett, Henselt and Heller have been included. We can see now that Schumann's delight in their romantic inclinations caused him to give an over-generous estimate of their worth. But he was so often right in his judgments (his article on

Brahms, whom he knew only as a very young man, is an outstanding example) that a few instances of "backing the wrong horse" would not have weakened the reader's confidence in his critical discernment.

The additions are in the form of quotations from Schumann's letters to his friends. In some cases the editor was perhaps justified: Wagner, for example, did not attract Schumann's attention till the two were both living at Dresden, by which time Schumann had ceased to write regularly for the 'Neue Zeitschrift'. It is interesting, therefore, to discover his private opinion of 'Tannhäuser', expressed in a letter to Mendelssohn, and, more important, his modified criticism of the work after seeing it on the stage. All the same, since the selection from the letters is not comprehensive, it would have been better to leave them out from this volume of articles—in spite of the several illuminating remarks they contain. It was particularly unwise to include Schumann's letters about himself and his work in a book whose main object is to represent the composer as critic: Schumann made it a point of honour never to use his pen for purposes of self-advertisement in the 'Neue Zeitschrift'.

The articles themselves are as full of interest to-day as a hundred years ago. Every music student (and many a professor and teacher, too) would do well to read Schumann's 'Rules and Maxims for Young Musicians'. Critics, perhaps, have less to learn from this volume, because Schumann's characteristic style of criticism, derived from the romanticism of Jean Paul and E. T. A. Hoffmann, has now been superseded by less fanciful and more scientific methods. The one instance of detailed analytical criticism is the article on Berlioz's 'Symphonie fantastique', but even here Schumann is driven to comment: "I believe that Berlioz, when a young student of medicine, could never have dissected the head of a handsome murderer with greater distaste than that which I feel in analysing his first movement". Music to him was essentially about "the great goings-on of nature and of human affairs" (to quote another philosopher), and like Oscar Wilde he sincerely believed that the true function of a critic was to "translate into another manner or a new material his impression of beautiful things". In this sense he was unquestionably a distinguished critic.

J. C.

Edward Elgar: Memories of a Variation. By Mrs. Richard Powell. Second Edition. pp. 134. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 1947.)

15s.

Those who did not possess this pleasant little book of personal recollections before may now be glad of an amplified edition. The others had perhaps better be prepared that they will not, at exactly double the original price, get a great deal more than they had in the first place. The small new chapter on Elgar's "enigma" is quite inconclusive, for it merely confirms once again that we need not hope ever to learn what the mystery or mystification really was. On the other hand it is quite useful to be told firmly that there is some unguessed-at secret about the actual theme of the Variations as well as another about its unheard counterpoint. Future programme annotators please note this, together with some minor corrections offered by Mrs. Powell: that Dr. Sinclair's organ pedals do not appear in the eleventh variation, that the subject of the 'Romanza' should be called Lady Mary Lygon, since she did not become Lady Mary Trefusis until seven years after the work was written—and so on.

The longer chapter identifying the "sitters" for Elgar's musical portraits is also new to this book, but it contains little that had not appeared in a pamphlet entitled 'My Friends Pictured Within', published by Messrs. Novello not long ago with substantially the same illustrations as are now added to Mrs. Powell's book. What is new in that chapter amounts to some welcome details about the special significance of various small musical phrases one had so far thought incidental and some critical remarks which do not go beyond telling us what Mrs. Powell thinks of this or that portion of the work and why she is particularly fond of it—always for purely personal reasons. Such sentiments are, of course, perfectly understandable in one who has been herself pictured within, but they cannot be expected to influence those who judge from outside and for whom it is enough to place the work, whatever its faults, among the major orchestral classics, if they are so inclined. It is natural that "Dorabella" herself should rather resent the criticism that the 'Intermezzo' would be better in place in 'The Wand of Youth' than among the Variations and that it is a "first-class pretty piece"; but one can only go on feeling it to be true, while placing a stress on the "first-class" and being glad that there is room for such "pretty" music even in a classic.

There are some things in this book that set one wondering whether a composer's friends who have secrets to disclose—even if they are secrets connected less with his private life than with his art—really do him a desirable service. Mrs. Powell, for instance, tells us what was the origin of that striking passage just before cue number 93 in the finale of the Variations, which also occurs in the C.A.E. variation (No. 1). This had always sounded most impressive and as though charged with some tragic significance, and it is disconcerting and disillusioning to be told that it was merely a whistled family signal.

E. B.

Maurice Ravel. By Roland-Manuel. Translated by Cynthia Jolly. ('Contemporary Composers' series.) pp. 152. (Dobson, London, 1947.) 8s. 6d.

This, the second volume in Dennis Dobson's useful series, is the first English publication of a work issued in France within a few months of Ravel's death. Mr. Scott Goddard in his introduction draws attention to the author's many qualifications for his task. A distinguished composer, he was for many years a close friend and pupil of Ravel's. There is a certain danger implicit in these qualifications, which are not so much those of a critical biographer as of a source and guide for later writers. Pupils who write their masters' lives are usually undiscriminating, often trivial and occasionally tendentious. Mr. Roland-Manuel is an exception. While leaving the reader in no doubt of his veneration for Ravel, he remains detached and open-eyed; we are spared those steamy effusions which make the reader long to attack the author with a stirrup-pump. The biographical parts of the book are excellent; only in the task of assessing Ravel as an artist and relating the man to his music is it inconclusive. There is still room for a critical estimate here, but as an authentic character study of one of the most enigmatic French composers Mr. Roland-Manuel's book will always be valuable.

Regarded in his youth as a dangerous revolutionary (the Prix de Rome judges, having rejected him twice, raised a formidable scandal by

refusing to allow him to compete a third time) and acclaimed as a colleague by the Stravinsky of 'Le Sacre du printemps' and the younger school of post-1918 French composers, Ravel was essentially an apostle of formal design and tradition. The more he extended his harmonic and rhythmic resources, the more he clung, in Mr. Roland-Manuel's words, to "the golden thread of tonality". He was far from being a conscious innovator. From the earliest days he ranked craftsmanship above a search for originality, and no one was more surprised than he at the influence of 'Jeux d'eau' on Debussy's pianoforte style. Finding his personal style at a very early age, he was unable, owing to a defect in personality, to extend his range; indeed it was almost inevitable that he should contract it. The result was that he gave of his best in his early middle period and wrote almost nothing of value (with the honourable exception of the left-hand piano Concerto) in the last twenty years of his life. It is clear beyond doubt that this decline was not due to the physical ailment which afflicted his last years. He remains a composer of singular charm who gave the world much in a very distinctive idiom, but who was not able either to scale the heights or to leave a scaling-ladder for his successors. He worked in an artistic blind-alley of his own choosing.

Mr. Roland-Manuel enables us to study both the strength and the weakness which made this possible. Ravel's father, a cultivated man, was one of the pioneers of the motor industry (he built a car as early as 1868); his mother was a Basque. The future composer of 'L'Heure espagnole' may have derived his interest in mechanical things from the former; he certainly owed his tenacity of purpose and detachment to the latter. His devotion to his parents had a strong element of fixation: his mother's death in 1917 reduced him to "a dumb stupor which resisted all expressions of sympathy"; he never married, and he retained all his life the passion for toys and make-believe, the imperiousness and other qualities of the spoiled child. Cortot, who knew him well, described him in the nineties as "a deliberately sarcastic, argumentative and aloof young man, who used to read Mallarmé and visit Erik Satie". He was a dandy whose side-whiskers and beard fastidiously followed the fashion and who cultivated an elaborate detachment from his own work. He eschewed emotion in any form and averted his eyes from tragedy in life and art. He went through life "elegantly frigid, with a horror of triviality and all effusions of feeling. . . . The more the secret powers which governed him unawares attracted him, the more he mistrusted them. He was suspicious of the lure of spontaneity". Mr. Roland-Manuel, though he supplies the evidence and goes so far as to hint that in ascribing to his industry alone the gifts of God, Ravel may have been more or less consciously satisfying a naïve pride and a childish Pelagianism, seems reluctant to draw the conclusion. Such a finicky attitude to the basic matter of life and art can only lead eventually to a negation of both. It is not wholly surprising that the imagination that conceived the riches of 'Ma Mère l'Oye' and 'Daphnis et Chloé' (which Mr. Roland-Manuel regards as the height of his achievement) should in later years have given birth to the flatulence of 'La Valse' and 'Tzigane' and the desiccation of the two post-war Sonatas. Sophistication very often springs from a fear of the adult; in Ravel, as in Stravinsky, it resulted in a triviality all the more distressing for the goodly harvest.

which it succeeded. Towards the end of his life Ravel was aware that something had been lost. He once remarked that without much regret he would exchange the technical knowledge of his *Trio* (1914) for the "artless strength" of the string *Quartet* (1902-3). Without necessarily sharing this preference, we may remark that neither artlessness nor strength seems to be distinctively characteristic of the *Quartet*. This work provided a rare instance of Ravel's asking the opinion of his colleagues. He submitted it to Fauré and Debussy. Fauré found the finale stunted and badly balanced. Debussy advised him not to touch a single note. Ravel obeyed Debussy; but Fauré was surely right.

The man who shrinks from experience is sure to be found in the realms of fantasy. Hence the significance of Ravel's first large-scale work, the unfinished opera '*Schéhérazade*' of 1898. He dropped this for Hoffmann's tale of *Olympia*; already the preference for automata is apparent. The two operas he completed have the most inhuman of plots, and in each case he took pains to reduce the human element to a minimum. In '*L'Heure espagnole*' he turned the living characters into marionettes and bestowed his devotion on the clocks; he altered the libretto of '*L'Enfant et les sortilèges*' in order to deprive it of any human interest whatever. Many of his instrumental pieces are deliberately descriptive, but, in Mr. Roland-Manuel's words, "he sought not so much to express and give life to states of mind as to represent the faces and scenes which gave rise to them". The faces and scenes are those of fairyland or natural history. The human figures are either dead (the Infanta), grotesque ('Alborada del gracioso') or mythological ('Ondine'). But though Ravel deliberately turned his back on one world, he unlocked another, and those who have followed him in have come forth greatly enriched. This is no mean achievement, but there was a price to pay. The artist who dispenses with human material is dangerously narrowing his compass; only a richly inventive and various imagination can prevent his repeating himself or growing stale. Ravel was always fascinated by the solution of technical problems. To quote Mr. Roland-Manuel again, "the difficulties spared him by life and denied him by nature he felt bound to create for himself artificially". Unlike most creative artists, he welcomed the restrictions imposed by outside circumstances, and no doubt needed them to liberate his imagination. Hence the satisfaction he derived from manipulating the frigid texts of *Prix de Rome* cantatas. Hence too his acceptance of the commissions for the left-hand piano Concerto, the '*Chansons madécasses*', the '*Don Quixote*' film music and the '*Boléro*' (he regarded this as a joke, but characteristically reproved Toscanini for taking it too fast). In course of time the stimuli which had been successful in his most creative years (1905-12)—fairyland, the dance in its various forms, the poetry of Mallarmé—became exhausted, and little but his excessive cleverness remained. Having worked the waltz threadbare, he sought vainly for a stimulus in jazz. In early years an enthusiastic if independent disciple of Chabrier, Satie and the Russians, he passed through much the same territory and reached much the same barren tableland as Stravinsky, though with a more becoming modesty. He said himself of his *Sonata* for violin and cello: "The reduction to essentials is carried to extremes"; and one or two of his utterances in later life seem to imply a recognition that the residue of such constant paring away, however "essential" it

may appear to the artist, is apt to be regarded by the rest of the world as bare bones.

Mr. Roland-Manuel devotes only a few pages to detailed examination of the music. His remarks on Ravel's harmony and the unconscious modal element in his melody are most illuminating; but he might have said more about his very individual treatment of traditional procedures (*e.g.* sonata form). Few composers have poured such new wine into such old bottles without tarnishing their reputations in the process. We could have done with more detailed analysis, supported by musical examples, and less of the vague "atmospheric" type of criticism. It is curious that Mr. Roland-Manuel nowhere mentions so typical and outstanding a work as the *Septet*.

The translation is on the whole adequate, though constructions like "The abandonment of the work resulted in persuading the Director" and "A disadvantage which has never been able to be remedied in any of the various theatres where it has been used" ought not to have survived the proof stage. "Comic opera" is not a translation of *opéra-comique* (p. 120). Two dates are given for the first performance of 'La Valse' (pp. 86, 88); the earlier is manifestly wrong, for the work had not then been finished. The book is amply documented, down to and including that new-fangled phenomenon, a Discography. A few of the many photographs were hardly worth reproducing, but we would not willingly lose that opposite p. 64. Here is Ravel the dandy complete with tapered moustache, beard, flowered shirt and collar as massive as a Roman fortification. Even on his death-bed we see him pictured in immaculate white tie and tails.

W. D.

Dmitri Shostakovich: the Man and his Work. By Ivan Martynov. Translated from the Russian by T. Guralsky. pp. 197. (Philosophical Library, New York.) \$3.75.

This is, for the price, a slight production but one that is not without interest. The reader spells out Ivan Martynov as a simple soul who is doing his best. The biographical particulars are few, but it will be news to most readers that in 1939-40 Shostakovich re-orchestrated 'Boris Godunov'. In 1927 the Stanislavsky Opera had produced 'Boris' at Moscow in the original version, and some years later the Bolshoy Opera followed suit. "Here it was found that Mussorgsky's orchestration, original and rich though it was, did not always satisfy the acoustic requirements of a large theatre", and Shostakovich was charged with the re-orchestration, his task being to adhere faithfully to Mussorgsky's ideas while making full use of the modern symphonic resources. The production was in course of preparation when the Germans invaded Russia, and the score has remained in the composer's portfolio to this day.

It is not made clear quite when this book was written. The author says 1942 in his preface. But there are several pages (148-153) about Shostakovich's ninth Symphony, the date of which is 1945. The reader feels curious to know whether Martynov's appreciation of this work was written before or after the official denunciation it received in the latter part of 1946. There is no reference to this in Martynov's pages, but 'The Times' of October 2nd 1946 reported that the ninth Symphony had been officially censured for "ideological impurities and deviations".

A quotation followed from 'Culture and Life', the propagandist organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party:

When the war ended the people expected from Shostakovich a truthful embodiment of the ideals and emotions which had destroyed the worst enemy of mankind. But instead, Shostakovich gave them what one critic called a symphonic joke . . . The unwholesome influence of Igor Stravinsky—an artist without a fatherland and without confidence in advanced ideas—dominates Shostakovich's ninth Symphony. It has forced into the background the influence of Bach, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky, which inspired him in his earlier works.

Martynov does not mention Stravinsky in this connection; he seems to be unconscious of the ideological impurities of the Symphony, of which he says:

This music contains so much vivacity and moral health, so much humour and inexhaustible joy of living, that it seems to be entirely woven of sunbeams and smiles. . . . It is far remote from the philosophical significance and depth of [the fifth, seventh and eighth Symphonies]. But this does not lessen its importance. It serves to give another proof of the composer's versatility . . . It proves the composer's inexhaustible optimism and his brilliant sense of humour . . . It is the embodiment of the composer's dream . . . to write a symphony . . . that would bring a smile.

Not idle is the curiosity one feels as to the date of this pronouncement. If it could be shown to have been written since the denunciation of the Symphony in 'Culture and Life' the evidence afforded of a measure of independent aesthetic opinion in Russia would be valuable. "When father says turn, we all turn"—that had previously been the principle of Muscovite criticism, exemplified by Martynov himself in his treatment of an earlier incident in Shostakovich's career, when (January 26th 1936) the newspaper 'Pravda' came down like a hundred of bricks on 'Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk'. The 'Pravda' article is quoted here at some length. Taken at its face-value, it is nothing but a Philistine's explosion of anger ("ugly flood of confusing sound", "a pandemonium of creaking, shrieking and crashes", "unadulterated cacophony", "ultra-Left art", "ultra-Left distortions", &c.). Vulnerable though the opera is, such a bludgeoning, with no pretence of analysis, is, as Martynov knows perfectly well, not criticism at all. Martynov, all the same, treats the pronouncement very deferentially, saying:

The article posed the timely question of combating the formalistic tendencies so alien to the spirit of Soviet art and so remote from the realistic heritage of the great masters.

Our author makes it clear that he considers this official rebuke to have directed Shostakovich into the right path. The composer "understood the essence of the severe criticisms levelled against him". Not that he at once began obsequiously to write the sort of music expected of him. "An honest artist, and truthful to the core, he did not yield to the temptation to superficially change his style, but sought doggedly for new elements in his art". It is, by the way, curious to notice how damaging a sense the expression "extreme Left" has (if Guralsky's translation is literal) in Sovietic criticism. When Martynov is writing of that phase of Shostakovich's development which, following Authority, he inclines to deplore he says: "The pendulum swung to the extreme Left, where he

found himself in the grip of unemotional, constructivist principles." "Constructivist", too, it will be noticed, is a word of blame, while nothing is so reprehensible as "formalism". The reader is left to guess what is meant.

Martynov is on the side of Authority in disapproving of "the excesses of formalism", the "scenic eccentricity" and the "studied alogism" of the opera 'The Nose' (1927-28), and in approving of the public orations of the seventh and eighth Symphonies; but, solemn though he is, he can appreciate, too, as apparently the political authorities cannot, the lighter and more fanciful Shostakovich, as represented by the ninth Symphony. What can be foreseen is the interest of a study, to be undertaken in a generation's time, of this composer seen as the victim or *corpus vile* of a kind of State dictation from which the western artist is still immune. For a lad of eighteen or nineteen his first Symphony (1924-25) remains an astonishing production, even more so than the corresponding works of Benjamin Britten. Has the mature Shostakovich fulfilled the promise of the 1920s? The critic of the future will pronounce thereupon, and will have a good subject for discussion in the effect upon this lively spirit of the State's guiding hand.

The Shostakovich of everyday life, as depicted by Martynov, is a man young for his years ("nothing can efface his youthful spontaneity or extinguish the twinkle of his bespectacled grey eyes"), "simple and even a little shy", "not fond of unrestrained praise", "of a kindly and responsive nature". His quoted sayings reveal him as a whole-hogging nationalist. "The honour of being the true continuer of Beethoven fell to the Russian composer Tchaikovsky", occurs in one of his newspaper articles. Similarly naïve is his defence of the murderer Catherine, the protagonist of his 'Lady Macbeth' opera ("I was out to justify Catherine . . . a clever woman, gifted and interesting"). Ivan Martynov has more sense than that. He pooh-poohs his hero's view of Catherine as a victim of circumstances, saying: "Even in such surroundings as Catherine's there were strong, honourable women, courageous and devoted". A note on p. 59 gives us information about Shostakovich's missing fourth Symphony (1935-36), which was submitted for performance to the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, but was withdrawn by the composer after one of the rehearsals and never played in public, although "those familiar with the score have expressed no doubts as to its value".

R. C.

Covent Garden Operas. Edited by Anthony Gishford. pp. 32 approx. (Boosey & Hawkes, London, 1947.) 2s. 6d. each. *Carmen*. By Martin Cooper. *Magic Flute*. By Rupert Lee. *Manon*. By Percy Colson. *Rosenkavalier*. By Alan Pryce-Jones.

These booklets are designed to give opera-goers an intelligent summary of the works included in the repertory at Covent Garden together with some information about the various composers' biographies. The text falls into two chapters, the first giving an account of the composer and the circumstances in which the particular opera was written, and the second consisting of a detailed narrative of the action with musical illustrations. There are also pictorial illustrations, which are well chosen to give an idea of past and present productions of the operas.

Mr. Alan Pryce-Jones, who has the most complicated opera to deal

with, has produced a model of informative exposition within the narrow limits of thirty-two pages. He has the advantage of having already studied 'Der Rosenkavalier' from inside as translator of the libretto for the Covent Garden production. But it cannot have been easy to reduce his knowledge of its complex intrigue and even more complex score to this readable summary.

'The Magic Flute' is well handled by Mr. Rupert Lee in all that concerns the action and the history of the opera, but the information given about the music is extremely meagre and what there is does not always arouse confidence in Mr. Lee's knowledge. There is nothing "Gregorian" about the chorale sung by the two armed men before the ordeals, except perhaps by a descent so remote as to be not worth mentioning. It is a pity, too, that having touched upon the Masonic symbolism of the opera, he gives the reader no further aid in that direction. Nor does he attempt any elucidation of the evident change of plan that resulted in Sarastro's being transformed from an evil genius into a benign figure. Giesecke's claim to have written the libretto is accepted without question, though recent scholarship has thrown doubt upon it.

For the two French operas Mr. Gishford has secured authors who have made a special study of Bizet and Massenet. Mr. Cooper's 'Carmen' is as scholarly and as interesting as one would expect from his admirable study of the composer published some years ago by the Oxford Press. Mr. Colson's essay on Massenet and his environment is admirable and contains at least one good story at the composer's expense. One general criticism must be made: in too few of the musical examples is any indication of the harmony given. A simple vocal line is not always sufficient.

D. H.

Early Dutch Librettos and Plays with Music in the British Museum. By Alfred Loewenberg. pp. 30. (Aslib., London, 1947). 5s.

This is a reprint from 'The Journal of Documentation' (Vol. II, No. 4, March 1947), but well worth having on one's bookshelves separately, especially if Dr. Loewenberg's hope to publish similar lists for other countries comes to be realized. It is, as he says in his introductory note, "a first attempt to catalogue and describe systematically the British Museum's extensive holdings of early opera librettos and related plays". A bibliography of this sort extending over the whole of the British Museum possessions in that line, Dr. Loewenberg continues, "would provide the musical scholar with the key to a collection unequalled elsewhere in Europe, which owing to the peculiar nature of the material is not easily accessible by means of the General Catalogue".

The present list is confined to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Even so, Holland, where opera did not flourish greatly during those 200 years and native opera was almost non-existent, has ninety-seven librettos to show in the British Museum, and this represents hardly a fifth of the total output, according to Dr. Loewenberg's admittedly rough estimate. One wonders what he is going to do about other countries. He will certainly find Italy, France, Germany and even England unmanageable, and such countries as Denmark, Portugal, Sweden or Hungary, not to mention Russia and Spain, will possibly confront him with an embarrassing wealth of material if he continues on the lines he has followed for Holland. For he includes translations of librettos

from other languages, and therefore works by foreign composers, mainly French in the present case. Indeed works of which the texts were originally written in Dutch and the music composed by natives of Holland are in a pitiable little minority.

The bibliographical arrangement of this catalogue is exemplary. But if Dr. Loewenberg persists in his scheme, he will probably have to consider the translation of titles. Most of us can scrape some kind of acquaintance with Dutch on paper as we go along, but if we are to come to Polish or Czech or modern Greek later on, we shall give up hope on coming across the equivalent of such a title as 'Opera, op de zinspreuk, Zonder spys, en wyn, kan geen liefde zyn', and we shall not often get a hint in Latin like 'Sine Cerere & Baccho friget Venus'. By the way, should it not be "spijs", "wijn", "zijn" and so on throughout this pamphlet? The substitution of "y" for "ij" does not strike one as conforming to Dutch practice between 1600 and 1800.

E. B.

Evenings with Music. By Syd Skolsky. Edited by G. T. Maconachie. pp. 408. (Faber & Faber, London, 1947.) 10s. 6d.

This book is addressed to "those thousands who are now able to hear good music through developments in radio and gramophone reproduction, and who want to understand what they hear", to quote the publishers' words on the jacket. The authoress, an American writer and lecturer, has devised her twenty-seven chapters as music lessons (or "evenings", as she prefers to call them) each including a little instruction in the rudiments of music, orchestration and form as well as on the social background, life and style of individual composers. Each chapter also contains a list of suggested gramophone illustrations.

Any musician who has ever attempted to instruct adults in musical appreciation will agree that the subject must be taught inductively, starting with "live" music rather than the theory of music, and will therefore sympathize with Mrs. Skolsky in her endeavour to avoid an academic approach in her book. But at times even the professional musician will find it difficult to follow the pattern behind her argument. After studying Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, the orchestra, the beginnings of fugue, and variation and sonata form in the first eleven "evenings", why, for example, does Mrs. Skolsky on the twelfth night suddenly introduce 'Music before the period of Johann Sebastian Bach', and also Handel? And many a newcomer to music might be pardoned for suffering from acute musical indigestion after the first "evening", which comprises the make-up of the symphony orchestra, the function of the conductor, how to beat time, the string section of the orchestra, an explanation of melody, harmony, rhythm and tone-colour, a selection of Italian terms, the life of Bach, and Bach's Passacaglia in C minor and a movement from a Haydn symphony thrown in for aural training—all in twenty pages.

The most satisfactory "evenings" are without doubt those spent in the nineteenth century. By this time Mrs. Skolsky assumes that all preliminary matters have been mastered, and so is able to devote each chapter to a succinct account of the life and style of outstanding romantics, ending with a detailed analysis of a representative work by each one. The final section of the book is as inconsequential as the beginning: Prokofiev is thrown in as the sole representative of the twentieth century,

and the last four "evenings" take the form of programme notes for four concerts made up of an arbitrary choice of items. A well-intentioned book containing adequate material for the uninitiated, but not well planned.

J. C.

Albert Herring: Comic Opera in Three Acts. Libretto by Eric Crozier. pp. 93. (Boosey & Hawkes, London, 1947.) 3s. 9d.

The librettist, Mr. Crozier admits in his preface, "writes to be sung, not to be read from a printed page". A published libretto is thus not to be judged as a literary production, and it must be enough to announce that of 'Albert Herring' as an attractive booklet, to be read beforehand by those who have not yet attended a performance of Benjamin Britten's third opera—"if there be such", to quote Mr. Crozier—and to be kept as a memento by those who have done so. The latter will find in it—for better, for worse—a good many words the singers did not allow them to hear. Not everything reads well, nor does its author pretend that it should. Some things are more amusing in the book than in performance, if only because they now emerge for the first time; others fall flat without Britten's pointed declamation and fascinating musical details. Here and there the language is out of character. "Twenty-five quid" is certainly not the particular slang of a respectable Suffolk greengrocer's widow, nor is "blasted little fool" less inappropriate to her than the adjective substituted in performance, which, freely admitted to the stage ever since Shaw's 'Pygmalion', offends not as a swear-word, but as a dramatic solecism. But such details should not be judged out of the theatre. There is no reason why we should ask of this libretto that it should read better than any other, and after all it has more literary quality than that of 'Fidelio' or 'Euryanthe.'

E. B.

Hommage à Charles van den Borren: Mélanges. pp. 360. (Nederlandsche Boekhandel, Antwerp, 1945.)

It must have been a pleasure to compile this volume in honour of a lovable and learned man. Of his learning we need no evidence, but the list of his publications is none the less impressive, not only for their number but for the wide range of musical history which they cover. Of Van den Borren the man we learn something in Suzanne Clercx's admirable pen-portrait—a man devoted to his art, blessed with an insatiable desire for knowledge and meticulous in all the details of his work. A happy man, as those who have met him will have reason to remember. Courageous, too, in the face of obstacles. When he began to lecture on musical history at the Universities of Brussels and Liège he had to make the best of a very poor equipment:

Ne disposant, pour l'illustration de son cours, que d'un mauvais piano, il réduisait tous ses exemples musicaux qu'il jouait, tout en déplorant la caducité de l'instrument ou bien, lorsqu'il s'agissait d'une œuvre vocale, il chantait la voix supérieure, reconstituant tant bien que mal au piano la complexité des ensembles polyphoniques.

That his earnestness and imagination triumphed over "ces déplorables conditions"—conditions not without parallel in England—we can well believe. And though the head is bound to disapprove, the heart cannot but be warmed to know that "il était, aux examens, d'une générosité quasi proverbiale".

The essays in this book, all by Belgian writers, cover a variety of subjects. They include the attractive comparison between the composer Guillaume Lekeu and the painter Henri Evenepoel by Valentin Denis, the argument by Franz Monfort that keys have no character of their own but merely associations, and some unpublished letters of Constanze Mozart and her son Wolfgang relating to Nissen's biography of her first husband. But the most substantial and the most important contribution is Roger Bragard's 'Études sur le "De Institutione Musica" de Boèce', which draws attention to the very large number of manuscripts of this work and to the amount of detailed labour necessary before the critical text which the author is preparing can be established. Many readers will hope that when the text does appear it will be the forerunner of a whole series of new editions designed to replace the volumes of Gerbert and Coussemaker.

J. A. W.

Le Rôle du point en musique, placé au-dessus ou au-dessous de la note. By Alfred Pochon. pp. 60. (Rouge, Lausanne, 1947.)

In this modest, clear and valuable little essay the author of 'Musique d'autrefois, interprétation d'aujourd'hui' has certain suggestions to offer on what he rightly considers one of the trickiest problems in the notation of interpretative intentions: the problem of indicating the precise articulation of individual notes within a phrase.

The silence which must separate *one musical phrase from another* is still ordinarily left to the performer's instincts and training to discover, both as to its exact position and as to its duration, although a faulty judgment in either respect is one of the most damaging errors, as well as one of the easiest to fall into when the music is in an unfamiliar or commonly misconceived idiom. Our interpretation of early eighteenth-century music, for example, is so frequently misphrased that some modern editors assist the student by such exceptional signs as a semi-vertical stroke across or above the stave: / or //; the latter indicating a more pronounced separation than the former (e.g. Carl Flesch, 'Art of Violin Playing', Book II; Jan Hambourg's edition of J. S. Bach's 'Sonatas and Partitas for Solo Violin'). Composers particularly anxious to secure good and accurate phrasing, such as Mahler, with his conductor's insight into the prerequisites of superlative orchestral interpretation, had already introduced similar signs into present musical usage. This is, indeed, an innovation of great value and in keeping with our tendency to write more precisely than our ancestors. (The comma , and the breathing sign V should, however, be used as *phrasing* signs only where the context prevents confusion with the singer's "new breath" sign or the string player's "up bow" sign. The semi-vertical stroke, single and double, is thus the most satisfactory symbol, on which we shall do well to seek general agreement.)

It is the silence which may in greater or lesser degree separate, not phrases, but *individual notes within the phrase*, that forms the subject of the essay here under review. Unlike the preceding, this has to some extent been shown in notation from an early period: for example, the medieval ligatures help to show the performer the desired grouping of notes within the phrase, while from the seventeenth century to the present time our familiar dots, dashes and slurs have been in persistent, though not unfortunately in consistent use.

The seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are here somewhat summarily dismissed. To remark "il est facile d'imaginer" a certain use on bowed strings of the jumping *staccato*, for example, is unduly tentative; we can prove its use from Jean Rousseau's recorded dislike for it ('*Traité de la Viole*', 1687). It is not entirely helpful to mention Geminiani's, Matteis's or Walther's use of *staccato*, or to cite the changes in bow-construction which culminated in the work of Tourte without going on to discuss the exact significance of these important facts. It is even a little dangerous not to add a plainer warning of the diverse early uses of this form of dot, with or without an added tie (*e.g.* to indicate that evenly written notes grouped in pairs or fours are to be played evenly in passages where contemporary convention would otherwise lead to their being interpreted unevenly (*cf.* Marais '*Deuxième Livre de Pièces de Violes*', 1692)). It is best to state unambiguously that the normal Baroque sign for the *staccato* is not the dot but the short vertical dash:

 These omissions can readily be forgiven an author who specifically disclaims any full knowledge of the earlier usages of the dot now employed to indicate a light *staccato*. "Passerons-nous directement à l'époque de Beethoven?" Suppose the composer writes:  Now the basic rule of the *staccato* dot is here correctly stated: the note bearing this dot is itself shortened; *i.e.* it is followed, not preceded, by a rest. That gives: ; but this is impracticable at any rapid speed, inaesthetic, and contrary both to the composer's actual intention and to the performer's instinctive execution.  is in fact both played and meant. This should logically be, but is not, written , unless indeed the *staccato* dot sign is to be abandoned entirely in favour of the literal notation: . But this last solution is, indeed, inadvisable, for the *staccato* dot suggests not only a silence, but a manner of playing; and in general, notation, though it should be (as it still is not) completely unambiguous, ought not to become so exact as to fetter the performer's temperament (which is, of course, why musicians of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries preferred to rely upon understood but far from rigid conventions to indicate both ornamentation and rhythmic nuance: conventions which we have now to relearn until the very poise and balance of them are once more second nature, as they were to their original interpreters).

The ensuing discussion of representative figures taken from Beethoven's quartets, the orchestral works and the pianoforte sonatas, though implying a consistency in the notation of ornament and articulation considerably beyond what even that pioneer of exactitude attained, is of great interest and value. So is Mr. Pochon's sevenfold system of articulative symbols; but although he draws particular attention to the difficulties, as well as the desirability, of catering for bowed and non-bowed instruments by a single system of notation, his system does not entirely solve them. A violinist, for example, he reminds us, can articulate  by a mere change of bow direction, where pianists and others must necessarily introduce a momentary silence, thus producing  instead; and there are other differences. He therefore suggests:

1.  No symbol; no special name. "Il faut jouer les notes simplement, sans les détacher". Result: "le jeu perlé, car chaque note conserve son indépendance propre".

(This is the violinist's *détaché*, however, so called from his having to change bow direction between each *détaché* note. "Plain" or "simple" might be conceivable terms for this style, which occupies a neutral position between *legato* and *staccato*.)

2.  "Coulé" (slur) "Les notes se fondent l'une dans l'autre". Result: "le jeu dit *en fusée*".

(This is the violinist's, as it is the pianist's *legato*, and that is the best general term for it. But for a violinist the slur further and specifically implies "all in one bow-stroke". Composers who are not violinists—Beethoven was a case in point—frequently place long slurs over complete phrases, which the violinist, though not the pianist, must on his own or the editor's initiative subdivide into several *legato* bow-strokes, however smoothly linked. The best notation here is to leave the composer's long *phrasing* slurs intact, but to indicate the shorter *bowing* divisions by the customary  and  for down and up bows respectively.)

3.  "Point" (dot) "Il faut enlever à la note pourvue de ce point la moitié de sa valeur"—take from the note one half (the second half, to be precise) of its value, replacing that half by a silence. Result: "un détaché moelleux, doux, sans sécheresse ni dureté".

(This is in effect a light *staccato*, and is perhaps best called that. But there is here a serious difference of usage between the bowers and the non-bowers. The violinist will take this dot as a sign for decidedly crisp articulation; the pianist for a comparatively smooth *portato*, more properly indicated by the symbol shown at No. 6 below. Since composers are more often pianists than violinists, it follows that quartets and other string players must always be on their guard against this source of confusion, which the sign system here advocated would, indeed, exclude satisfactorily. There is also a difference of nomenclature. Violinists now restrict the term *staccato* to a series of *staccato* notes taken in a single bow-stroke; the plainer and more standard *staccato* taking one note in one bow-stroke is called *martelé*. In this respect it would probably be best for the violinists to make the concession necessary to uniformity.)

4.  "Virgule" (dash) "Il faut enlever à la note les trois quarts de la valeur"—take from the note three quarters of its value. Result: "sèchement".

(In effect a full *staccato*, and best called that. But it is open to doubt whether two different symbols for two degrees of *staccato* are really desirable. It might be better to leave the degree—*i.e.* the length of the silence—to the performer's judgment and to reserve this sign, the vertical dash, for a modification we have no other means of specifying exactly: namely, a somewhat emphatic, lightly accented *staccato*.)

5.  "Portamento" (no accepted English equivalent: and of the two available Italian terms *portato* is preferable to *portamento*, since the latter is required for the emotional glide between two notes of different pitches, employed by singers, violinists and others, though debarred to pianists by the mechanics of their instrument). "Il faut enlever à la

note un quart de sa valeur"—take from the note one quarter of its value. Result: "delicatement, en portant la note".

(This is not very satisfactory. The proper sign for a pronounced *portato* is the following, No. 6. Sign No. 5 means for a violinist what he calls *staccato*, i.e. a series of *staccato* notes grouped in a single bow-stroke. These he may play abruptly, with a rigid bow—*martelé-staccato*—or delicately with a thrown or springing bow—*spiccato, volante, saltato*, etc.; but these distinctions are his own technical affair, which it is a mistake to attempt to incorporate in the general terminology. The best general term is perhaps *grouped staccato*, since that also adequately covers the pianist's and others' reading of this useful symbol, namely dots with slur.)

6.  "Point souligné" (dot and line—literally, dot underlined; but the symbol is quite often written the other way up: )

"Il faut également enlever à la note un quart de sa valeur, mais l'accentuer pesamment"—likewise take from the note one quarter of its value, but stress it. Result not stated: but this is in fact a description of the *portato* proper, in a fairly emphatic form.

7.  (Purely keyboard effects which it is a mistake to include in a *general* system, just as it is a mistake to include the bowed *spiccati, saltati*, etc.)

Now clearly this system is neither faultless nor complete. Two of the commonest signs are missing:  (a somewhat stressed *legato*) and  (a decisive accent compatible with either *legato* or *staccato*), so that perhaps  should be added for the latter combination). And there are several other changes and additions worth considering: for example, the violinist's  (an unemphatic *portato*). I hope, therefore, that this highly suggestive little essay may be regarded, not indeed as a final solution, but as the starting-point of a discussion from which an agreed solution may presently result.

R. D.

Facsimile di un autografo di Antonio Vivaldi, con note sul Centro dei Studi Vivaldiani all' Accademia Chigiana—Siena (1938–1947). Edited by Olga Rudge. ("Quaderni dell' Accademia Chigiana", No. XIII.) pp. xxiv, 49. (Ticci, Siena, 1947.) Edition limited to 300 copies. Lire 400.

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Two of the articles have been translated into the sort of heavy, involved English which is becoming far too commonly used by musicologists (" . . . and so it has been possible to reconstruct the original Vivaldi texts, with no small labour, but with the consciousness of having reduced divergencies (!) between the reconstructed work and the composer's intention to a minimum."). The booklet is attractively printed and produced, but on the whole rather unsatisfying.

R. T. D.

Chronologisch-thematisches Verzeichnis sämtlicher Tonwerke W. A. Mozarts.

By Ludwig, Ritter von Köchel. Third edition edited by Alfred Einstein: revised, with corrections and additions. pp. 1,052 + xlix. (Edwards, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1947.) \$10.00.

Like our own George Grove, Ludwig von Köchel was a distinguished scientist who also became through love of the art a learned musicologist and achieved immortality through his work in that sphere. For while Köchel's botanical and mineralogical researches may preserve his name among a restricted group of specialists in those sciences, it is a household word with musicians and music-lovers all over the world. They would be lost, indeed, without the guidance of the "K" number in programmes and catalogues of Mozart's music.

The Thematic Catalogue of Mozart's Works, which Köchel published in 1862, is one of the standard books that every writer on music and a great many musicians must possess; and, like other standard works which have been in existence for a long time, it is easy to take it for granted. But it is surely remarkable that, just at the time when Mozart's stock was at its lowest in Germany, Köchel should have produced this monumental and, for its date, most scholarly and thorough catalogue, in which every known composition by or attributed to Mozart was subjected to careful scrutiny and bibliographical annotation.

But scholarship does not stand still and new information comes to light from time to time. So Köchel's original volume gradually lost its completeness, though rarely, except in the matter of dating certain compositions, its accuracy. A second edition, prepared by Paul, Graf von Waldersee, in which the work was brought up to date and the musical quotations, for which Köchel had relied mainly upon pianoforte arrangements and vocal scores, were revised in the light of Breitkopf & Härtel's "Gesamtausgabe" of Mozart's works, began to appear in 1877 and was completed, apart from some unimportant supplements, in 1883.

After another generation, which witnessed a change in critical attitude towards Mozart's music, a great increase in the general appreciation of it and an intensification in musicological research into texts and dates and attributions, a further revision of Köchel's Catalogue was due. It was undertaken by Dr. Alfred Einstein, who thus balanced the work of his colleague Dr. Hermann Abert in revising the great biography of Otto Jahn, to whom Köchel dedicated his book. The third Edition was published in 1937, but no copies were submitted for review in this country by the German publishers.

Dr. Einstein had already been driven into exile by the onward drive of the Nazis and so was not in a position to give as much attention as he would have wished to proof-correction, and he was in any case deprived of the opportunity of checking his proofs with original documents. So a

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certain amount of error crept in, and even in the years of war fresh discoveries came to light. Dr. Einstein published the necessary corrections and additions serially in 'The Music Review'.

These corrections and additions have now been added as a supplement to the revised version of the third Edition, which is the subject of this notice. As it was impracticable to reset the whole work—it has been reproduced by the photo-lithographic process—it was impossible to incorporate the revisions in the text. The reader's attention is called to any reference in the Supplement by marginal signs. It is a rather cumbrous procedure, but it is the sole inconvenience in a singularly well-arranged volume.

One measure of the magnitude of Dr. Einstein's work of recension is that the present edition is only fifty pages short of doubling Köchel's original, the amount of printed matter on each page being rather greater in the new edition. To take a specific instance of this enlargement, Köchel's notes on 'Le nozze di Figaro' (excluding the musical examples which themselves are now enlarged) run to barely one page. Einstein has four pages packed full of matter, to which the Supplement adds another four and a half pages, one of these notes correcting the tempo of the overture from *Presto* to *Allegro assai* (conductors please note!). The most interesting additional material here printed is a sketch for Susanna's recitative and air in the last act, which shows that Mozart's first thoughts could be quite commonplace. By an alteration of the order of the words in the recitative from "Giunse il momento al fine", matched to a rather flat musical phrase, he produced the vivid opening we all know, while the air begins tamely to words reminiscent of the Metastasian manner, "Non tardar, amato bene". One wonders who suggested the revised version of the text. In the matter of the recitative I would put my money on Mozart.

The latest addition to 'Figaro,' contained in the Supplement and, apart from the recently rediscovered Quartet for flute and strings (K.285a) the most substantial new music in it, is a recitative to "Non più andrai" written for Benucci possibly, as Dr. Einstein suggests, for a concert performance of the aria. The flute Quartet just mentioned was one of those composed by Mozart at Mannheim for the Dutch amateur flautist de Jean, and was discovered by M. de Saint-Foix among parts of the other quartets published by Peters. It is fully described in the third volume of M. de Saint-Foix's critical biography.

A book like "Köchel" is for use rather than for reading, and it is only in use that one can test its utility. In so far as a test of some weeks' fairly intensive use can be conclusive, Dr. Einstein's edition passes with the highest honours. One is constantly amazed at the completeness and order with which the mass of material has been marshalled. Once one has mastered the method of the *apparatus*, it never fails to provide the information sought. The indexes and lists of works are copious and comprehensive. If there is a mistake or a misprint, it has eluded me. That the book is physically somewhat cumbersome seems to be inevitable; at least it is difficult to see how it could be conveniently split into two volumes. It remains now for the book to be made procurable in Great Britain, and an English translation would be a boon to the weaker brethren.

D. H.

Neue Oper: Gottfried Einem und seine Oper 'Dantons Tod'. By Hans Rutz.
pp. 70. (Universal Edition, Vienna.)

A new Austrian composer has appeared and seems to have taken his country by storm. He is Gottfried Einem, born at Berne in 1918 as the son of a military attaché of the Austrian Embassy to Switzerland. According to Mr. Rutz's biographical sketch Einem is a young man of cosmopolitan culture, having been influenced by the Danes Jacobsen and Kierkegaard, the Russians Dostoyevsky and Tchekhov, the Englishmen Aldous Huxley and Charles Morgan, and so on. He has a 'Turandot' ballet, a Capriccio and Concerto for orchestra, as well as piano pieces and songs to his credit; but 'Dantons Tod' appears to be his major work so far, and it had the distinction of a production at the Salzburg Festival this past August, under Otto Klemperer. Those who suspect that this may have been a *faute de mieux* choice may be reminded that Salzburg, which has always its native Mozart and its adopted Strauss, has never been notorious for any special keenness on novelties.

The new opera is a setting of a play by Georg Büchner (1813-37), the author of 'Wozzeck', and in this respect at least its composer has taken a leaf out of Alban Berg's book. Whether the new opera will prove to have lasting vitality can hardly be judged from the present pamphlet, which uses up a good deal of its space for various contributions: essays on Salzburg by Bernhard Paumgartner and on problems of operatic production by Wolfgang Schneditz, Caspar Neher and Oscar Fritz Schuh, while of Mr. Rutz's own forty-two pages only thirty-one deal with Einem's score. Still, one is persuaded that here is a new personality worth keeping in mind.

E. B.

REVIEWERS

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E. B.	Editor
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P. M. Y.	Dr. Percy M. Young
R. C.	Richard Capell
R. D.	Robert Donington
R. T. D.	R. Thurston Dart
W. D.	Winton Dean

A number of book reviews are necessarily held over

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

Adrian, Walter, *Music, to becalm his fever* (Herrick) for Unaccompanied Chorus (S.A.T.B.). (Elkin, London.) 7d.

It may well be that this four-square partsong sounds better than it looks; there is certainly nothing like difficulty or miscalculation in the writing. But the melody is dull, whereas Herrick's words are not, for all their naivety. The first and third stanzas only are set; in the first half of the third stanza the melody is given to the tenor, with accompaniment of contralto and bass only. Whatever the vagaries of the words, the music sticks resolutely to four-bar phrases.

I. K.

Arnell, Richard, *Canzona and Capriccio* for Violin and String Orchestra, Op. 37. (Music Press, Inc., New York). Full Score, \$3.00.

Mr. Arnell is a British composer who has spent most of his composing life in the United States. Thus we may be excused if we know very little of the music of this gifted musician. After seeing the score of his 'Canzona and Capriccio', one realizes that he is a composer of great talent and skill. Both pieces have the merit of spontaneity and unpretentiousness. The serene 'Canzona' and the lively 'Capriccio' are not difficult to understand; there is nothing unusual in the harmony and the soloist is not made to indulge in redundant musical pyrotechnics. If this is a fair specimen of Mr. Arnell's work one may look forward to hearing more, although one does not recognize any distinctive musical voice speaking in the present work.

K. A.

Arnell, Richard, *Siciliana and Furiante* for Piano. (Music Press, Inc., New York.) \$0.75.

The introductory 'Siciliana' consists of a graceful and wayward melody in A minor over a falling bass; the movement is short and ends on a half-close. At the beginning of the 'Furiante' the listener is whirled through an apparently chaotic succession of keys; the falling bass makes itself felt, and shortly afterwards there appears, *pianissimo* over that bass, a transformation of the 'Siciliana' theme into an angular but expressive marching phrase which thereafter permeates the work. It is never developed, but simply appears in a succession of unrelated keys until, after a pause more than half-way through the 'Furiante', it settles in the home key of A minor, in which it makes six entries in succession. The Sibelian chaos-to-coherence scheme is thus clear, but the piece is handicapped by a lack of material, for all its brevity. The writing is effective but not easy.

I. K.

Arnell, Richard, *Sonata for Chamber Orchestra*, Op. 18. (Music Press, Inc., New York.) Full Score, \$3.00.

Mr. Arnell appears to be a prolific composer, having produced no less than forty-seven works during the last eight years. His writing in this

work is commendably fluent. One has no difficulty in seizing at once upon the development of his themes, unfolding naturally and logically and holding the listener's attention like an intelligent discourse. His sense of rhythm is alive. The light scoring, too, is clear, efficient and pointed. The musical ideas themselves are not especially memorable—not necessarily a fault, however, in a light work of this kind. Consisting of a single movement, the work may well be negotiated by a good amateur ensemble.

E. L.

Bach, *Organ Toccata in F major*. Arranged for Two Pianos by Vivian Langrish. (Oxford University Press.) 6s.

There are dozens of agile organists in Britain who would consent with pleasure if they ever met a listener sufficiently interested to ask for a performance of this magnificent piece; and there are dozens of organs on which its glories can be revealed. But no, it has to be made to tinkle and clatter instead. We are invited to sneer at a previous generation for arranging the Hallelujah Chorus for flute, but Bach's organ music is treated in hardly less irresponsible a fashion by our own. One must be grateful for the arranger's small mercy in not adding to Bach's notes except by way of legitimate doublings. In fact, if the thing must be done, this is the way to do it.

I. K.

Bach, *Sheep may safely graze*. Arranged for Two Solo Violins and String Orchestra by Reginald Jacques. (Oxford University Press.) Full Score, 2s. 6d.

In this simple and efficient arrangement the ritornelli are given to the two solo violins; two flutes would better represent the original tone-colour and may be used instead without disturbing the score. The vocal line is given to the first violins. The parts are easy and effective.

I. K.

Bartók, Béla, *Seven Pieces from ' Mikrokosmos '*. Arranged by the Composer for Two Pianos. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 10s.

One approaches these pieces with lively anticipation, but it must be admitted that the musical interest is disappointingly small. Only the final piece, entitled 'Ostinato', lasts as long as two minutes and only in this piece is there any sustained composition. The other pieces are 'Bulgarian Rhythm', a short melody repeated over an ostinato 7-8 accompaniment; 'Chord and Trill Study', similarly based on a plain undeveloped melody; an amusing 'Perpetuum Mobile' mainly in alternate seconds and thirds; 'Short Canon and its Inversion'; a naïve 'New Hungarian Folksong'; and a 'Chromatic Invention' in which the two voices of Piano I are simultaneously inverted by Piano II, a thing easily done in a Bartók free-for-all of remarkable dissonance. The piano writing is not outrageously difficult: but the second pianist must not object to playing second piano, as the composer does not bother to distribute the "tune."

I. K.

Benjamin, Arthur, *Sonata for Viola and Piano*. (Boosey & Hawkes, London). 9s. 6d.

The viola repertory is being slowly enlarged by contemporary composers, and this Sonata is a notable addition to it. The three movements

(the second of which is a waltz) are linked together, not only by *attacca senza pausa* instructions, but also by a snippet of a theme that obviously ran through the composer's mind while he wrote the whole work. The Sonata is by no means easy to play, and it is significant that the composer has made an orchestral version of the piano part, so that the work may be played as a concerto.

K. A.

Berkeley, Lennox, *Lord, when the sense of thy sweet grace* (Richard Crashaw), Anthem for Mixed Chorus and Organ. (Chester, London.) 6d.

Lennox Berkeley has travelled a long way from the crudities of 'Domini est Terra' to the austere devotion of this anthem. A perfect balance has been struck here between the luxurious imagery of the words and the demands of a medium that is notoriously hostile to idiosyncrasies. The feelings run the deeper for the restraint in which the music is held. Diatonic discords and free modulations are the chief features of the style; a sympathetic organ part gives unobtrusive help in most places where intonation is difficult. The choir must possess a warm legato tone. Apart from its obvious merits this work is welcome as an important contribution to a repertory which for too long has been forced to live on the past.

I. K.

Britten, Benjamin, *The Holy Sonnets of John Donne*, for High Voice and Piano, Op. 35. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 7s. 6d.

Mr. Britten's vocal writing is usually characterized by the frequent use of wide intervals. Sevenths and octaves abound, and indeed they are used with great dramatic effect. These wide intervals are a feature immediately recognizable in both his operas and his songs, though they may not be their main characteristic. There is a certain violence in his manner of writing for the voice, often regardless of the literary inspiration. On the other hand, he has a sensitive conception of musical prosody; his settings are invariably "right". But he is not always able to adapt his style to the poets of his choice. I am not aware, for instance, that he has an approach to Donne distinct from his approach to Rimbaud. In the settings of both poets, it is true, the mood and the verbal inflections are faithfully caught, the symbolism and imagery artistically evoked. One has nevertheless the impression in the end that the music is not fertilized by the poetry, but superimposed on it: it is Mr. Britten's vocal style alone that ultimately commands attention. It must be admitted, however, that this dramatic and violent style is wonderfully apt to the nine sonnets by Donne forming this collection. Two only, 'O might those Sighs and Tears' and 'Since she whom I loved', are songs in a more reflective mood. The remainder have almost the fierceness of El Greco, whose 'St. Peter Repentant' is reproduced as a frontispiece.

E. L.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Mario, *Candide : Six Illustrations pour le Roman de Voltaire*, for Piano. (Delkas, Los Angeles.) \$2.50.

This is excellent incidental music which one would hope to see available in an orchestral form should there be occasion to use it for, let us say, a radio production of 'Candide'. Mr. Castelnuovo-Tedesco has illustrated six episodes from Voltaire's novel in a manner more heavy-handed, perhaps, than the manner of the great ironist of literature,

though the scenes are evoked with unmistakable accuracy. The Westphalian castle is portrayed by a minuet, appropriately stiff and formal. The march of the Bulgarian soldiers is suggested by a ferocious slavonic rhythm, and the scene in South America of the young girls and the monkeys by a rumba. The Garden on the Bosphorus makes use of Mozart's "Turkish" rondo. Candide's comments are displayed in the score, too, by means of shrill little recitative figures, while the wise Pangloss would seem to be making his observation about the best of all possible worlds in a passage marked "calm and philosophical".

E. L.

Copland, Aaron, *Hoe Down, from 'Rodeo'*, for Violin and Piano. (Boosey & Hawkes, New York.) \$1.00.

Able violinists and pianists will enjoy playing this delightful piece of merry-making by Aaron Copland. Although a certain well-known tune is used in the middle section, there is never any doubt as to the composer's identity, for in this, as in all his works, his rhythmic and harmonic trade-marks are ever-present. No one can fail to be stimulated by 'Hoe Down'.

K. A.

Corelli, *Concerto grosso in D major*. Arranged from the Violin Sonatas by John Barbirolli. (Oxford University Press.) Full Score, 4s. 6d.

The relative dullness of the inner parts, which the arranger is scrupulous enough not to relieve by additions to Corelli's harmony, are evidence enough that a keyboard continuo is the right medium for this music, quite apart from the other obvious advantage of having a different timbre for the accompaniment. But there is no gainsaying the effectiveness of this music. The Grave and Allegro makes a fine rhetorical opening and is followed by an Adagio in which a string quartet is contrasted with the *tutti*. There follows a lively Gigue in which the first violins inevitably have all the meat. It is with something of a shock that one finds that the suite continues overleaf after so traditional an end. The fourth movement is a Sarabande with the melody given to the cello (wrongly given the alto instead of the tenor clef in this score) and the contrapuntal texture of the finale at last gives all the instruments something worth saying; it makes a splendid and vigorous peroration.

I. K.

Dohnányi, Ernö, *Six Piano Pieces*, Op. 41. (Lengnick, London.) 5s. 7d.

Inevitably one attempts to link these recent piano pieces by the doyen of contemporary Hungarian composers to models of the past. Though they were written in 1945, they might have appeared at any time from 1845 onward, and some of them even before. I like the charming 'Ländler' worthy of Schubert and the 'Scherzino' reminiscent of Brahms. Technically the most ambitious of the set is the piece romantically entitled 'Cascades' with its ceaseless, though ultimately wearisome, arpeggio figures—a piece which Liszt in his old age would surely have found *vieux jeu*. A more imaginative piece in the Lisztian style is 'Cloches' with realistic bell-like effects and making play of the contrast of registers.

E. L.

Gill, Harry, *About my father's farm* (Edward Wright). Song for Medium Voice and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

This is a ready vehicle for the arch and winsome singer: it is a mainly

strophic setting, with a catchy tune and slim piano part, of words whose refrain cosily runs thus:

And as I keep the cows—
The wood between to hide me—
No-one in the house
Can tell who sits beside me !

I. K.

Gradenwitz, Peter, *Four Palestinian Landscapes*, for Oboe and Piano.
(M. & H. Publications, Inc., Tel-Aviv.)

The twelve-note scale is the basis of the technique used in the four movements of this Suite, inspired, according to the composer, by scenes in Palestine. It is music of complicated structure, the ideas presenting no apparently logical sequence, with passages unexpectedly rhapsodic in nature contrasted with others of equally unexpected violence. A theme based on a twelve-note row, which appears at the opening of the first movement, is said to recur in each of the four movements "symbolizing to the composer the unity of atmosphere apparent in such different surroundings as the Yarkon River, the Sharon Plain, the Lake Kinnereth and the Galilee landscape". I have searched the abstruse score without finding a single trace of its recurrence. Music, shall we say, of an hermetic appeal—for Schoenbergians only ?

E. L.

Greaves, Ralph, *A Psalm of Thanksgiving*, 'Whoso dwelleth', for Unaccompanied Chorus. (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

The use of short solos woven into the structure in order to bring into prominence the significance of some symbolical passage is a commendable feature of this sensitive setting of an extract from Psalm xci. It is not in any way an original work ; nor, on the other hand, is it merely academic. With the minimum number of modulations and with the simplest contrapuntal means the composer faithfully reflects the psalm's expression of hope and confidence.

E. L.

Handel, *Messiah*. Edited from the Original Sources by J. M. Coopersmith.
(Carl Fischer, New York.) Vocal Score, \$1.25.

Acuity of scholarship, enthusiasm and patience have here conspired to produce a fascinating variorum edition. One would hail it as definitive but for the impossibility of regarding any edition of 'Messiah' as irreproachably consistent with the final authority of the composer. Those whose respect for Handel rises higher than the indefinite fervour of the commonalty will not wish to possess any other score, for herein is all that lies within the autograph, the Smith transcripts (in London, Hamburg, Tenbury and New York), the Foundling Hospital parts, the Randall and Abel score of 1767 and a miscellany of sketches. Differences between the scores are faithfully recorded. They serve to show, on the one hand, how each separate performance was to the composer a separate artistic and administrative problem and, on the other, that his genius was of the restless, revising order. "How beautiful are the feet", for instance, exists in at least five different versions. Of these the most interesting—though not necessarily the most effective in oratorio performance—is the duet *cum* chorus arrangement printed in Dr. Coopersmith's Appendix. This attractive and not difficult movement (the familiar opening leads to

and unites with an independent Chapel Royal anthem) merits separate publication for ecclesiastical use.

We fear that few conductors will regard the appendix as more than a dispensible appendage (we recollect choristers who, having possessed the Prout edition for many years, never even discovered that there was in that edition an appendix), which will be to their disgrace. For nothing is more likely to revivify 'Messiah' than occasional substitution of the autograph "Rejoice" for the square-cut afterthought, while those anxious to economize time may well be advised to try the abbreviated "Why do the nations". This will be to the chagrin of all basses to whom the air—together with the unwarranted *da capo*—is a party piece. The time saved might be devoted to the moving and essential middle section of "He was despised."

To determine what belongs to an "authentic" score and what to an appendix is, editorially, a heart-searching task. Dr. Coopersmith offends as few susceptibilities as possible by giving his imprimatur to the selection of items approved by tradition. We have no complaint with this (even had the autograph or Tenbury scores been followed there would still have been supplementary material to consider), but we underline the fact for the benefit of those whose mistaken piety leads credulous audiences to believe that they are hearing what Handel heard.

The purist will have misgivings when faced with the singers' versions of "He was despised" and "I know that my Redeemer liveth" and the cadenza to "Ev'ry valley". These approved variations (in the hand of Smith) embody the essence of the baroque. Our gratitude is with Dr. Coopersmith for revealing what generally is not realized and our sympathy with the conscientious conductor who aspires towards an ideal which, with continued application, only becomes more elusive.

But there are degrees of truth which are absolute. Dr. Coopersmith corrects fatuities in former emendation of Handel's syllabic division (*vide* "Amen" chorus and "He shall feed His flock"), restores Handel's note-values (the final alto entry in "O thou that tellest" is relieved from the overlapping and befogging chord of A major in the other voices) and puts back one important and suggestive detail of expression—the *martellato* in the final chorus. "And with His stripes are we healed" is surprising but correct (after the score but not the word-book) and grateful to throat and ear. Acceptance of this against tradition makes us wonder why Dr. Coopersmith gives way on "the" for "this King of glory". The latter, demonstrative, is more typical of Handel. The suggested octave transposition of countersubject on p. 88 is unfortunate; rather, momentarily, split the tenors. On p. 84 the eye halts at an uncomfortable division of syllables—"in-iq-uities". Regarding the introduction to "The people that walked in darkness" we feel undue dogmatic pressure (nor do we particularly appreciate the realization of the bass).

Where in music such as this does the editorial function cease? We have metronomic assistance added but only a bare minimum of interpolated expression marks (clearly distinguished, of course, from the original). Since the Christmas tradition permits only the more vivid contrasts we should have welcomed parenthetical proposals likely to promote a more general subtlety. The reduction of the orchestral score might well have incorporated the *con rip.* and *senza rip.* directions which emphasize

the delicacy of so much of the text. This alternation, so essential to appreciation of basic principles, is, in truth, of more importance than disquisition on the actual number of oboes (this was variable and, in any case, they were somewhat different oboes from ours) intended to support the chorus. Wagnerian orchestration is indicated in short score. Why not Handelian?

Dr. Coopersmith's work is so devoted that we recommend his edition to every oratorio singer. The discerning will follow his observations with zeal. But 'Messiah' performances will continue intrepidly in habiliments of improbability until enterprise in publishing ensures that an edition such as this becomes in every way the most attractive musical possession of all those to whom music is Handel and Handel is 'Messiah'. The principle of sugared pills is not always unsound, and Dr. Coopersmith's prescription demands immediate and universal administration not only in Britain but also, we understand, in the United States.

P. M. Y.

Handel, *Overture to 'Alcina'*, arranged for String Orchestra by Reginald Jacques. (Oxford University Press.) Full Score, 4s.

There is no need to say more of this three-movement Handel operatic overture than that it is Handel at his orchestral best. It is gratifying that Dr. Jacques should have arranged it in such a way that most amateur string orchestras can perform it with little difficulty.

K. A.

Herbert, Ivy, *Two Songs for Medium Voice: Jenny kiss'd me* (Leigh Hunt) and *A widow bird sat mourning* (Shelley). (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

The Linnet (Robert Bridges), Song for Medium Voice and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

One should not seek in these songs for harmonic or melodic originality; but the composer has written (in 'The Linnet' and 'A widow bird') two songs that are particularly interesting for the curious way in which the piano part, instead of accompanying, alternates with the voice part. Only at the end of both songs are piano and voice heard together. 'The Linnet' has not quite as much feeling for Robert Bridges's words as it would seem at first; but 'A widow bird', with the bleak octaves on the piano (suggestive of "the mill-wheel's sound") is a fine setting of Shelley's words which requires an alert singer to perform it adequately. 'Jenny kiss'd me', the companion to the latter, is a conventional song, but it contrasts well with its partner.

K. A.

Holst, Imogen, *In Heaven it is always Autumn* (Donne) for S.S.S.A.A. (Oxford University Press.) 8d.

When composers set to music passages of mystical prose, one has some cause to be afraid of the result. However, Miss Holst, in this setting of part of a Donne sermon, has added a valuable piece to the repertory of female choirs, though despite its excellence, one cannot help thinking that the concluding words are better for declamation than for singing.

K. A.

Johnstone, Maurice, *So are you to my thoughts* (Shakespeare), Song for Medium Voice and Piano. (Lengnick, London.) 2s.

The vocal line and the accompaniment are harmoniously wedded

in this setting of Shakespeare's seventy-fifth sonnet. Half-lyrical, half-declamatory, the singer emphasizes the rhythm of the lines while the imagery of the poem finds some reflection in the chromatic harmony of the accompaniment. A good though not a very original song, gratifying to sing.

E. L.

Kabalevsky, D., *Seven Nursery Rhymes*, for Voice and Piano, Op. 41. (Russian and English Words.) (Anglo-Soviet Music Press : Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 7s. 6d.

The spirit of naïve humour in Russian music is still alive, judging from these songs, for they are in the true Russian nursery tradition of Mussorgsky, Liadov and Prokofiev. What is especially captivating is their naturalness. They are songs written with much ease and freshness of invention. The miniature melodic ideas are endearingly intimate and the pointed harmony of the accompaniments is pleasant. Here is an aspect of Kabalevsky's music more realistic and genuine than anything in his bigger works. The song 'For want of a nail the shoe was lost' is a quaint little march ; there are several narrative songs—one, about an old woman whose petticoats were cut off by a pedlar, quite delightfully racy ; a novel Russian version of 'Old King Cole' ; and others either pointing a moral or purely fanciful. The English translations by Nancy Bush are altogether acceptable.

E. L.

Lutyen, Elisabeth, *Six Chamber Concertos*, Op. 8 : No. 1, for Nine Instruments. (Chester, London.) Miniature Score, 5s.

This miniature work consists of four movements—gawky chips in the twelve-note scale. To the ears of the uninitiated there reigns in such an example of the Schoenberg school the usual sense of wilful disintegration, the sense of hopeless chaos out of which some organization nevertheless appears in the end. It is curious to see what happens to each theme as it is gradually surrounded and obscured by a thin net of spiky barbed-wire counterpoint. The first movement is a theme with tiny variations; the second, a mere twenty bars, is an aria. For the remaining movements Miss Lutyns, faithful as are all good Schoenbergians to the classical forms, uses the orthodox moulds of the scherzo and trio and the rondo.

E. L.

Mendelssohn, *Scherzo* from '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*'. Transcribed for Two Pianos by R. Sterndale Bennett. (Elkin, London.) 6s.

The difficulties are many and great and all caused by the inefficiency of the arrangement. A moment's consideration could have obviated many of the awkward leaps and semiquaver repetitions without even changing the notes that the listener would hear. More's the pity, as this piece is not so fantastically unsuitable for two pianos as many of the works plundered for the cause.

I. K.

Milford, Robin, *The 121st Psalm* for 4 solo Voices (or Semi-chorus) and Mixed Chorus unaccompanied. (Lengnick, London.) 1s.

We can always rely on Mr. Milford to provide us with a work that is both well done and enjoyable. This setting of the 121st Psalm is no exception. The most remarkable thing about it is the smoothness with which it flows along : there are no obvious attempts to make the music fit the words, for both go hand in hand all the way. It is to be noted that

the composer, who is never a hindrance to the practical musician, has provided for the solo parts to be sung by a semi-chorus and also for an organ to be used, if desired.

K. A.

Milhaud, Darius, *Danses de Jacarémirim*, for Violin and Piano. (Delkas, Los Angeles.) \$2.00.

This is Milhaud in his "Brazilian" mood—a worthy pendant to the composer's 'Saudades do Brazil'. Without any first-hand knowledge of the popular music of South America, one has nevertheless the conviction that its spirit is alive in these charming vignettes, so genuine and unaffected are the folk-like tunes with their wry harmonic accompaniments. After all the Spanish music by French composers we have heard, from Bizet onwards, Milhaud has discovered in these pieces an Hispanic genre of his own. "Jacarémirim", incidentally, is a diminutive of the Portuguese word Jacaré, an alligator, through the significance of the quaint title 'Dances of the Little Alligator' is by no means clear. One explanation offered is that in a state of fear or excitement the South American alligator designs with its feet and tail a set of strange rhythmical movements suggesting the steps of national dances. The titles of the three pieces forming the suite, 'Sambinha', 'Tanguinho' and 'Chorinho', are each a diminutive of the name of a popular dance.

E. L.

Moeran, E. J., *Fantasy Quartet* for Oboe, Violin, Viola and Violoncello. (Chester, London.) Miniature Score, 4s.

After a period of writing large-scale orchestral works (the Symphony, violin Concerto, piano Rhapsody, Sinfonietta and cello Concerto), Moeran seems to be returning to his former love—chamber music. This Fantasy Quartet possesses the qualities of freshness which we associate with this composer's best work. The actual material is slight, but one is content to drift along with this delightful meandering music. There are pages reminiscent of the early string Quartet; indeed one cannot pretend that the work shows anything new in Moeran's development, except possibly the pages on which he employs three keys simultaneously. But where music is so charming does this really matter?

K. A.

Oldroyd, George, *Paean of Remembrance* ("Let us now praise famous men") for Chorus and Orchestra. (Oxford University Press.) Vocal Score, 1s. 3d.

Against this piece may be urged some well-worn "modern" harmony and some questionable accentuation of the words for the sake of precise recapitulation, but the balance is redressed by the skill with which a maximum effect is obtained from voice-parts which are evidently designed for a large choir of no great technical ability. The harmonic range is fairly wide, but the music is admirably coherent. The work lasts about five minutes.

I. K.

Philidor, *Overture to 'Les Femmes vengées'*. Edited by Adam Carse. (Augener, London.) Full score, 3s.

We shall never hear any of Philidor's numerous operas, but here at least is an opportunity (thanks to Mr. Adam Carse) of hearing the overture to one of them, composed in 1775. It is not a work of startling originality, but pleasant to listen to now and then. The editor explains in a note preceding the score how it can be performed by orchestras which have not all the prescribed players.

K. A.

Purcell, 'Abdelazer' Suite for Strings and Keyboard. Edited by Edvard Fendler. (Music Press Inc., New York.) Full Score, \$2.00.

Purcell transcriptions continue to appear very frequently. The present one is more fascinating than most. Apart from its intrinsic musical merits, which are great, the incidental music for Aphra Behn's play 'Abdelazer' (printed in its entirety here, except for one song) is interesting because it was one of the last works Purcell completed before his death. The editing, by Edvard Fendler, and the realization of the keyboard part, by Ernst Victor Wolff, are good. All the nine movements are sure to meet with general approval, especially as the second is already familiar as the theme of Britten's "Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra".

K. A.

Purcell, Trumpet Overture from 'The Indian Queen', arranged for Trumpet, Strings and Timpani (optional) by Lionel Salter. (Oxford University Press.) Full Score, 3s.

This Purcell arrangement should be impressive in performance, stressing as it does the exciting higher notes of the trumpet. A comparison with the first part of the 'Alcina' overture by Handel (reviewed above) will show how easy it is for those ignorant of Purcell's dates to believe him to be influenced by that illustrious composer. Those better informed will be convinced that the influence worked the other way.

K. A.

Raynor, John, *The California Song* (Hilaire Belloc), Song for Low Voice and Piano. (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

A shapely sixteen-bar tune is given a diatonic harmonization and repeated for the second verse with a slightly chromatic one. Not much, even in these days, for half-a-crown, but pleasant to sing.

I. K.

Reizenstein, Franz, *Three Concert Pieces* for Oboe and Piano. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) 4s. 6d.

This set of pieces ('Humoresque', 'Rhapsody', 'Scherzino') is to be recommended most heartily. The melodies are delightful, the harmonies are enticing, the devices are admirable—and praise on these lines could be continued. The influence of Bartók is apparent, especially in the 'Rhapsody', but only a wilful disregard of the facts of musical history could find adverse criticism in the detection of influences.

K. A.

Rubbra, Edmund, *String Quartet in F minor, Op. 35*. (Lengnick, London.) Miniature Score, 9s.

This Quartet is dedicated to Vaughan Williams, and sharing with his fourth Symphony the key of F minor it partakes also of its power and severity. Indeed the Quartet is couched in terms almost morose, from which there is little relief. A carefully designed first movement contains within its symmetry a very wide harmonic range; for all the enharmonic freedom of the harmony there appear to be no loose threads nor indeed any superfluous notes. The principal subjects are both *cantabile*, the first in 4-4 and the second in 3-4; by way of contrast there are *ostinato* accompanying rhythms which have an exciting cumulative effect. Rubbra's polyphonic skill enables him to write with remarkable economy of material. It might be felt that this economy is carried too far in the slow movement,

which is long in spite of the fact that it leads into the last movement instead of recapitulation. It is a threnody largely coloured by the viola, which has an important solo part. The last movement is a highly polyphonic Vivace in mingled measures of 6-8 and 3-4. It is an athletic piece, skilful as ever in canonic device and inversion. The themes are bleak rather than striking, but it is obvious that their importance is subsidiary to the overall impression of events crowding in upon each other with ever-increasing speed.

I. K.

Rubbra, Edmund, *Sonata in G minor* for Violoncello and Piano. (Lengnick, London.) 6s. 9d.

One has the greatest admiration for Mr. Rubbra's fluent technique. He is a builder, and what he builds is solid and well founded. A spacious *andante* forms the opening movement; a *vivace* movement makes, somewhat unconventionally, the centre-piece, and the final movement is a theme and variations concluding with a fugue. In form, in the logical sequence of ideas, the work is faultless. But it is a work that has the defects of its qualities: this very pre-occupation with formal perfection for its own sake can easily lead to an indifference to the beauty of detail. The themes are somewhat hard-driven and so, too, are the instrumentalists, at any rate the cellist who, throughout the three movements, can count on no more than nine silent bars.

E. L.

Rubbra, Edmund, *Three Psalms* for Low Voice and Piano, Op. 61. (Lengnick, London.) 3s.

The Psalms here set are Nos. 6, 23 and 150. In the first, "O Lord rebuke not in thine anger", the soul's passionate cry is strikingly set to as expressive a declamatory line as the composer has ever given us, with a no less effective accompaniment, mainly *ostinato* with the left hand duplicating the right two octaves lower. Some of the resonances of the piano part in the slow tempo seem to be audible more to the composer's ear than to an ordinary listener's, but the occasional lacuna may well be accepted as in keeping with the style of the piece.

It is with surprise that one finds much the same technique applied to "The Lord is my Shepherd": the piano writing becomes on occasion even barer, and singers may well feel that the composer might have given them more help in achieving the tenderness that the familiar words inevitably invoke. The hearing of a devoted performance only strengthens the impression of this conflict of manner and sentiment.

"Praise ye the Lord" conveys well the unity of the Psalm, subtly touching in details of word-painting without interfering with the general sweep: the very tight rein on the contrapuntal accompaniment is chiefly responsible for this. The voice part is difficult in both time and intonation, but does not demand an excessive compass.

I. K.

Scarlatti-Benjamin, *Suite* for Flute and Strings. (Boosey & Hawkes, London.) Arrangement for Flute and Piano. 5s.

A welcome for this suite "after Scarlatti" is qualified by regret that Arthur Benjamin did not choose to exercise his skilled and deft hand on an original work for the medium. When he has obviously been at such pains to devise an effective solo part from the material he has given himself one cannot help thinking that free composition would be easier

and probably more interesting. There are five movements: an Introduction and Allegro in A minor, an Allegretto in A, an Andante in F \sharp minor which touches deeper matters, and a final Allegro di molto in A, characteristic of both composers. The piano part is economical but not easy; the flute is very happily treated.

I. K.

Schubert, Songs with English Translations by Richard Capell. (Augener, London.):

Am Meer (Heine). 1s.

Der Tod und das Mädchen (Claudius). 1s.

Dithyrambe (Schiller). 1s. 6d.

Erlkönig (Goethe). 2s.

The basis and merits of Richard Capell's translations of Schubert's songs have been discussed in recent reviews in 'Music & Letters.'

In 'Am Meer' the translator has an almost impossible task; it is an outstanding example, even for Heine, of compression and highly charged imagery. The fact that the body was consumed as well as the soul has been omitted, but the relative insignificance of this point is a measure of the success of the translation.

In 'Der Tod und das Mädchen' the Maiden's part is an improvement on the original; Death's words in one place flow across a rhythm which Schubert may have intended to be four-square. 'Dithyrambe' is wholly successful; the fact that it does not follow the repetitions of the original is all to the good. 'Erlkönig' matches the characterization well, especially the naivety of the Erlking's words as heard by the child; in this connection one has to swallow "their dancing upkeep" or do without a rhyme.

I. K.

Scott, Cyril, *Theme and Variations* for Two Pianos. (Elkin, London.) 7s. 6d. (2 copies required.)

The asymmetrical theme is split up into 4-4 and 5-4 bars and announced in dissonant block chords. The first of the eleven variations to follow is effectively laid out for the two pianos presenting an ornate rhythmic version of the theme. Then comes a short scherzo, an *adagio*, and quick and slow movements thus alternate until in the final fugue the theme is enunciated in its original form. The lay-out is familiar, and it is natural that the variations should become longer and more complex as the work evolves. What is disconcerting is the luxuriance of the keyboard writing—a luxuriance of a past age. One closes the score with the feeling of having been surfeited by writing rather too ornate for such austerity tastes in composition as seem now to be the fashion. E. L.

Stevens, Halsey, *Serenade* for Viola (or Clarinet) and Piano. (Music Press, Inc., New York.) \$1.00.

One is apt to be indifferent to this piece at first, but on further acquaintance its harmonic asperities and rambling theme become enjoyable.

K. A.

Tate, Phyllis, *Soldier, won't you marry me?* for Unaccompanied Women's Chorus (S.S.A.). (Oxford University Press.) 6d.

The wit and effectiveness of this piece of slapstick depends mainly on

whether agile voices can perform their unvocal tricks *con brio* and in time and tune. This obstacle surmounted (and experienced singers with a sense of fun can do it), success is sure.

I. K.

Toch, Ernst, *Ideas*, for Piano. (Delkas, Los Angeles.) \$2.00.

At the age of sixty Toch manfully continues to be the bright boy, although it must be already clear that music has decided to repudiate the emancipation in which he took so zealous a part. This suite is in four short movements; there is the usual difficulty in description, as they have neither key signatures nor time signatures. The first is marked "Calm" and the second has an inscription "A black spot dances in my closed eye"; both these pieces are charming in their acidulated way. But the listener who thinks that all passion is mellowed if not spent is then confronted with the bizarrerie of No. 3 (Vivo) and the final Allegro in true 1920 style with its merciless instruction "Each tone [meaning note, in German-American] hammered".

I. K.

Tomblings, Philip, *Osme's Song* (George Darley) for Unaccompanied Chorus (S.A.T.B.). (Elkin, London.) 7d.

This unpretentious and very singable setting catches the spirit of the ingenuous words; the composer has taken the trouble to match the rhyme scheme with his melodic shape and is rewarded by the tripping way in which this Alla Gavotta all but sings itself. The melody is given to the tenor for the second verse and there is a happy device at the end whereby the second half of the tune is repeated to the words of the beginning of the song.

I. K.

Vaughan Williams, R., *My Soul Praise the Lord*, Hymn for S.A.T.B. and Organ. (Oxford University Press.) 4d.

The Souls of the Righteous, Motet for Treble, Tenor and Bass soli with S.A.T.B. (Oxford University Press.) 4d.

These two pieces reveal two sides of Vaughan Williams's religious music. The unaccompanied motet 'The Souls of the Righteous', composed for the Dedication Service of the Battle of Britain Chapel in Westminster Abbey, may be described as mystical, while the hymn 'My Soul Praise the Lord' is more open and downright. The former is a lovely composition, with many remarkable modulations. Those who know Vaughan Williams's music will doubtless agree that the motet is in the idiom of "Flos Campi" and the hymn in that of "Job".

K. A.

Vaughan Williams, R., *The Lake in the Mountains*, for Piano Solo. (Oxford University Press.) 2s. 6d.

This is a short *pianissimo* improvisation, *andante tranquillo*; it makes an admirable study in legato playing and delicacy of tone. The musical content is very slight; after an introduction in D \flat there is a ruminative *cantabile* in B \flat in 6-8 time; this gives way to a second *cantabile* in F \sharp minor in 9-8 time; this second theme is repeated without transition in D minor with a running accompaniment in fourths and fifths which vanishes in a final chord *ppp*. There is a frail inconsequential beauty in this piece, but one must love its composer already before embarking on it.

I. K.

Walton, William. *String Quartet in A minor.* (Oxford University Press.) Score, 5s.

Walton here returns to chamber music after nearly a quarter of a century's work in other spheres of composition. Comparison of this new string quartet with the earlier work in this medium is impossible, since that was destroyed; but we know that the composer has developed considerably in the intervening years. The new Quartet resumes his career where the violin Concerto left it eight years ago. As in all his big works, the composer places his most important thoughts in the first and third movements; but the Quartet shows a new departure in keeping the second and fourth movements exceedingly short. The contrast is very deliberate: the easing of the tension is akin to that found in Shakespeare's plays.

The first movement opens, with no preliminaries, with a lovely theme played by the viola, accompanied characteristically by a counter-theme played by the second violin. A section in Walton's most rhythmically energetic style follows, to be succeeded by a recurrence of the opening theme, which is then treated fugally. The rhythmic section returns, but the peace of the opening prevails at the end.

The brief scherzo which follows invites comparison with the scherzo of the Symphony: even the device of 2-8 in 3-8 bars appears. But there is an essential difference between the two scherzi, for the earlier one is deliberately malicious, while the later is delicate.

The slow movement may be considered the most important. It is full of a sad beauty difficult to describe. The central section has an interesting rhythm which may be taken as a reappearance of Walton's "Mediterranean mood". The movement ends sadly and quietly, as it began, to be followed by a rondo full of rhythmic vitality. A romantic tune appears for a short time, but disappears as quickly as it came. The movement is built up to an exciting climax which gives a most vigorous ending to the work. It is interesting to note that the Quartet is very definitely styled "in A minor". That it is a worthy successor to the previous large-scale works is beyond doubt, and it may be acclaimed one of the most important chamber works of our time.

The score is a reproduction of the original manuscript, perfectly clear and readable.

K. A.

Wordsworth, William, *Hymn of Dedication* (G. K. Chesterton), for Mixed Chorus and Organ. (Lengnick, London.) 2s. 6d.

Mr. Wordsworth's setting of Chesterton is appropriately robust: crashing chords as the hymn opens with the words,

O God of earth and altar
Bow down and hear our cry
Our earthly rulers falter,

followed by some competent antiphonal writing, and tier-like entries in canon. But to be robust in this setting of Chesterton is not enough. The work with its sweeping melodies and familiar harmonies recalls Parry. I should have thought that lines so typical of Chesterton's mordant humour as

Deliver us, good Lord
From lies of tongue and pen,
From all the easy speeches that comfort cruel men

would have called for something more resourceful than the all too conventional succession of common chords over a pedal-bass.

E. L.

REVIEW OF PERIODICALS

The fourth number of the first volume of 'Musicology' (published at Middlebury, Vermont) is not musicological in any very forbidding way. Wolfgang Stresemann's article on the "Eroica", "Beethoven's Bonaparte Symphony", indeed, is perhaps not quite musicological enough even in the lightest sense of the word, for it contains the indefensible assertions that there is no real second subject in the first movement of that Symphony, and that the E minor episode in the development of the same represents something "contradictory to classical form". Stresemann attributes much importance to the source of the theme of the finale, saying that though it would be a mistake to consider this movement "simply in relation to Prometheus", "yet the basic idea of the Prometheus legend, the bringing of fire to mankind, has a symbolic meaning for the 'Bonaparte' symphony." His analysis of the finale, then, makes much play with the alleged representation of "the old world, the 'reactionary' element" by the bass and of "the revolutionary idea, the new age" by the melody. Anthony Philip Heinrich, a composer ignored even by 'Everyman's Dictionary of Music', is commemorated in an article by Irving Lowens, who tells us that Heinrich 100 years ago was called the American Beethoven, but who does not ask us to take this very seriously ("his music seems hopelessly inept and amateurish to us to-day"). Still, "he was an artistic figure to be reckoned with in the turbulent years preceding the Civil War". So early as 1817 Heinrich gave a performance of Beethoven's first Symphony "in the comparative wilderness of Lexington, Kentucky". His own compositions were "tremendous tone poems, comparable in orchestral complexity and size (although not, of course, in musical value) with those of Berlioz and Richard Strauss". He lives in the history of the bohemian life of New York as a picturesque eccentric. Hermann Ullrich has a readable article, 'Three Hundred Years of Viennese Opera', but he fails to throw any light on Mahler's fall from office. 'Fantaisie-Imromptu' by Ernst Oster suggests Beethoven's Sonata in C sharp minor as a source of Chopin's Op. 66.

The 'Revue Musicale', No. 207 (summer 1947), contains an article, 'Strings and Bows', extracted from Joseph Szigeti's memoirs, with anecdotes of Stravinsky, Bartók and Schnabel. Stravinsky is shown in an unexpected light with this saying: "My father was an interpreter—a singer—and I grew up with the feeling of the all-important part the executant plays when he gives life to our written music". Bartók commented on the timing of his compositions (e.g. "6 minutes, 22 seconds") given in his scores, saying: "It simply means that that is the time I take to play it, and not that that is the time it should and must take". In the notes of the day André Boll has cordial words for Poulenc's 'Les Mamelles de Tiresias' at the Opéra-Comique: "On a slightly old-fashioned text by Guillaume Apollinaire Francis Poulenc has composed a score which, now playful and again brilliant, is perfectly enchanting".

He is severe on the new 'Pelléas' scenery, by Valentine Hugo, at the same house: "It would be impossible to be more untrue to the spirit of the music or to achieve a more complete disagreement between sounds and colours". Joseph Baruzi gives a warmly appreciative account of a lecture-recital by David Ponsonby, whose programme represented English keyboard music through the centuries.

The first number of an extraordinarily handsome new French quarterly, 'Polyphonie' (London agents J. & W. Chester Ltd.), edited by André Souris and Albert Richard, is dedicated not to polyphony but to music in the theatre. Some of the contributors are: André Schaeffner (an article on what he calls "pre-theatre", i.e. dramatic representations of the ages and peoples who have been or are independent of an actual edifice), Boris de Schloezer (the time-factor in drama and music), Oscar Esplá (a philosophical survey of opera through the ages), Gustave Cohen (the revival of medieval drama), Bernard Champigneulle ('Music and Plastic'), Bronislaw Horowicz (the staging of opera), Rollo Myers (ballet music) and Daniel-Lesur (incidental music). So far the articles are of a general and literary order, for the most part dealing with philosophical and historical considerations. We come to actuality with Vladimir Fedorov's article on Prokofiev's opera 'War and Peace' (Leningrad, June 1946), which includes extracts from Russian criticisms, mainly but not unreservedly eulogistic. René Leibowitz writes at length on Schoenberg's operas. He is a whole-hogging Schoenbergian, and finds profundity even in the deliberate commonplaces of the action of 'Von Heute auf Morgen' (the subject of which is a trifling disagreement between a suburban married couple and their reconciliation). Leibowitz says:

Isolated and solitary in a hostile and stupid world, the constant object of the most narrow-minded incomprehension on the part of the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries, Schoenberg reacts towards them in the most tragic and cruel way possible. Since they will give him nothing he will give them his utter contempt! With the generosity of a great musician he presents them with a picture in which they may recognize their pettifogging selves. Not all the ill-will and stupidity of this world, however, have dried up Schoenberg's generosity, and 'Von Heute auf Morgen', this caricature of modern man, that is to say, Schoenberg's contemporary, has turned out one of the most important works of dramatic music.

Leibowitz, coming to 'Moses and Aaron', tells us that the work was begun in 1929, and that the first two acts were finished before 1932. Put on one side for more than ten years, the score was taken up again lately, and there are hopes that Schoenberg will now finish it. It represents the conflict between the intellectual, philosopher and artist (Moses) and the man of action (Aaron), and is Schoenberg's most important dramatic work. Farther on in the magazine Luigi Dallapiccola gives an account of his dodecaphonic opera 'The Prisoner', the sources of which are a story by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, 'La Torture par l'espérance', and Charles de Coster's 'Legend of Ulenspiegel'. It promises to be a grim entertainment. The next number of the magazine will concern itself with rhythm.

Alberto Mantelli contributes to the July 1947 number of 'La Rassegna Musicale' a substantial article on Manuel de Falla. Giorgio Graziosi's Rome Letter discusses at length Veretti's choral 'Sinfonia sacra' (composed 1943-46), Honegger's 'Nicolas de Flue' and Petrassi's Magnificat. Veretti's work (for male-voice choir and an orchestra strong

in percussion) is praised for its virility and eloquence. The movements represent three prophets : Zechariah (the first movement begins with his words : "Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars !"), Jeremiah and Isaiah. The critic esteems Honegger's work as occasional. He praises agreeable pages, but thinks that the score represents a diversion and not the main line of Honegger's art.

The September number of the Zurich 'Schweizerische Musikzeitung' is dedicated to the Basel musicologist Edgar Refardt on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. There is a list, two-and-a-half pages long, of Dr. Refardt's publications, the best-known of which is his dictionary of Swiss musicians (1928). Willi Schuh has a long appreciation of the Britten operas ('Lucretia' and 'Albert Herring') performed at the Lucerne Festival. The critic's tone is most cordial as regards both composer and executants, and the performance of 'Albert Herring' in particular wins his delighted praise. An article descriptive of musical life in Germany says that the "inflation" that supervened upon the cessation of hostilities has been succeeded by stagnation. The correspondent remarks upon the gap felt at Berlin between Nikisch and Furtwängler as conductors of the Berlin Philharmonic, and Sergiu Celibidache. He says that most of the best players in the orchestra left for Hamburg on the arrival of the Russians at Berlin, and the north-west German radio orchestra is consequently the best in Germany. He has wonders to tell of the artistic life at Baden-Baden—French headquarters and the seat of the south-west radio. Foreign, and in particular French, artists are heard there in profusion, and the programmes are the most progressive in Germany. He mentions Wolfgang Fortner's violin Concerto as the principal German novelty. Meanwhile, he says, English and American artists are in the British and American zones forbidden as a rule to perform before German audiences. The principal exception is the American conductor and composer John Bitter. He goes on to report the interest felt, especially in Eastern Germany, in Boris Blacher, whose chamber opera 'Die Flut' was broadcast by Berlin Radio and then performed at the Dresden Opera. Two Romeo-and-Juliet operas were broadcast, Blacher's from Berlin and Sutermeister's from Hamburg. The correspondent mentions that within a fortnight performances were given of Hindemith's E♭ major Symphony at Tübingen, Munich, Rostock, Berlin, Dresden and Frankfort. The October number of the magazine leads off with a short article on Heinrich Schenker by Hellmuth Federhofer. Willi Schuh writes a warm appreciation of Lennox Berkeley's 'Stabat Mater', first performed anywhere on August 19th at Zurich by the "English Opera Group". Meanwhile the Brussels correspondent reports the favourable impression made there by the first French performance of Britten's 'Lucretia'. Remarking on the Christian element in the libretto, he says : "What a very English idea ! For the story happens 500 years before Christ". The French origin of the libretto has escaped his notice.

The interesting March-April number of 'Musica' (published at Cassel) is largely concerned with Hindemith and Kaminski. Werner Oehlmann leads off with an article, 'New Humanism'. "We are at the end of the humane era in music ; the soul of the individual man is no longer, in art, the measure of all things". That was the belief of the 1920s and 1930s, which Oehlmann sets out to examine. *Sachlichkeit* was

the word used for the conception of music which supervened upon the humane period from Haydn to Richard Strauss. It stood for a music that was no longer the expression of personal experience, but was thought of as something possessing a life in itself, an existence in sound, an elemental phenomenon. Man—that is to say, the significant and characteristic individual represented in classico-romantic art—was in the course of the nineteenth century submerged by the mass. The rapid multiplication of the population was a factor. Personality had no room for expansion. The aspirations of romantic art corresponded to nothing in reality ; the discrepancy between the pathos of 'Tristan' and the squalor of working-class life was a yawning gulf. "A dark new faith became law ; the humane age, that had begun with the Renaissance half a millennium before, seemed to have come to an end both in the arts and in actual life" but Oehlmann refuses to accept the paradox of a man-made music that is inhuman. Stravinsky's apparent inhumanity represents not a definitive condition but a reaction against the excessive sensibility of late-romanticism ; "his denial of human feeling is pugnacious, not objective". Hindemith began in much the same frame of mind but, as he developed, his early "contempt for a human content" gave way bit by bit until, from his polemical and caricatural *Sachlichkeit*, he attained to the comprehensive and responsible representation of a man's nature in 'Mathis der Maler', a work "that exemplifies the central position which humanity occupies in present-day music". This proposition is developed with references to the philosophy of Jasper, Heidegger and Kierkegaard, and brings the author to the declaration that the idea of the new humanism must transcend man's phenomenal life and rational limitations ; "it must have a religious base".

Karl Schleifer follows with a memoir of Heinrich Kaminski, who died on June 21st 1946, "shortly before the completion of his sixtieth year and after finishing the work he himself designated as his most important, the 'Spiel des König Alphelius'". He was born on July 4th 1886, at Tiengen in the Black Forest, the fifth of six children. The father, a Silesian Pole, born in 1833, had a strange career. He was ordained a priest of the Roman Catholic church at Warsaw, was professor of Romance languages at Toulouse University, and was a priest in London for a time. At Munich in 1869 he came into relations with Döllinger, broke with Rome and joined the Old Catholic community. Then in 1878 he married an opera singer, Mathilde Barro, who was of Greek extraction. After unhappiness as a bank clerk, Heinrich Kaminski went in for music professionally in 1907. Schott's published his Op. 1, a setting of the 130th Psalm, in 1912. The article gives details of Kaminski's retiring life and of his productions. In 1930 he was teaching composition at the Prussian Academy of Arts at Berlin. His political views were opposed to the Hitler regimen, and Goebbels pronounced him "non-Aryan", though with no grounds. For years his music was boycotted until, in 1942, the Bärenreiter house at Cassel began to publish the works he had written since 1936. In the war his son Donatus was lost in a submarine. He signed his last work "Ried, May 25th 1946" and died, mourned by all who knew him as a superior being. A pupil, Erich Doflein, adds a chapter of memories. Fred Hamel writes an article in defence of Furtwängler. An anonymous English critic discusses the Hamburg production of 'Peter Grimes', which he considers as probably the best the work

has had anywhere. Werner Bollert writes on opera at Berlin (Florizel von Reuter's 'Postmeister Wyrin', of which he thinks but little, Busoni's 'Arlecchino' and Gian Carlo Menotti's 'Amelia').

The October 1947 number of the 'Oesterreichische Musikzeitung' includes an article by Erwin Rieger on the composer Egon Kornauth. Born at Olomouc in 1891, of a music-loving family, Kornauth went up to Vienna in 1909 and studied at the Music Academy under Robert Fuchs. During the first world war he was employed as a coach at the Vienna Opera, while composing copiously. The years 1926-28 he spent in the Dutch East Indies, where he conducted an orchestra and played much chamber music. Later on he visited Brazil, and in 1940 was appointed to the teaching staff of the State Academy at Vienna. Thence in 1945 he moved to the Salzburg Mozarteum. Rieger calls Kornauth a lyricist, impressionist and romanticist, with a traditional style which he is ready to modify with latter-day resources when these seem called for. He has written many songs, piano pieces and sonatas for two instruments, and mention is also made of a piano Trio, Op. 27, string Quartet, Op. 26, string Quintet, Op. 30, clarinet Quintet, Op. 33, string Sextet, Op. 25, and a Nonet, Op. 31.

In the April 1947 number of the same magazine Wilhelm Keller has an article on the first theme of Bach's 'Art of Fugue', of which Schweitzer has said: "The theme cannot strictly be called interesting . . . but has plainly been made with an eye to its manifold workability and capacity for inversion." Yet he admits that it grows upon us. Keller says he had long been preoccupied with the question, when one day it dawned on him that the inversion of the theme was almost the same as the opening of Luther's hymn 'Aus tiefer Not schrei ich zu dir'. The argument seems decisive that Bach did not make up the theme with an eye to its workability, but, here in the last of his great works as throughout his life, had in his mind a definite meaning of which his music was the symbolic form. 'The Art of Fugue', then, is Bach's prayer *de profundis*. A lively and, in fact, pugnacious article in the same number by Hans Gál, called 'Musical and Unmusical', examines the question whether conductors hear in their minds the sounds indicated in latter-day scores, and whether, for that matter, even the composers of the same do. He suggests that something must be wrong with music whose authors do not hear the sound of it in their heads as they write. The purity of the matter of music has been sullied by the piano pedal, the illustrative attempts by composers of programme-music, and so on, and the plague of unmusicality is, he says, so prevalent that few among the outstanding musical personalities of to-day in any country are immune. He quotes a typical passage "from the pen of a celebrated composer", and says he will bet his two ears—"which are among the best I have come across in a long practice of music"—against a cherry-stone that the musician has never been born who could hear this page in his head.

R. C.

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